

Esquire

December 2017

Style & Substance

The Design Issue

80+ PAGES OF
ARCHITECTURE
INTERIORS
OBJECTS
ACCESSORIES
CLOTHES
CARS AND TECH

Stephen Bayley
on bad taste

Tom Dyckhoff on
men at home

Tim Lewis on
Britain's trendiest
estate agent

Johnny Davis
on the meaning
of headphones

James Dyson,
Frank Gehry and
Paul Smith on their
lives in design

Mert and Marcus's
women

Oscar Isaac

In Star Wars: The Last Jedi,
Hollywood's leading man of the
moment takes flight

Interview by Miranda Collinge
Photographs by David Slijper

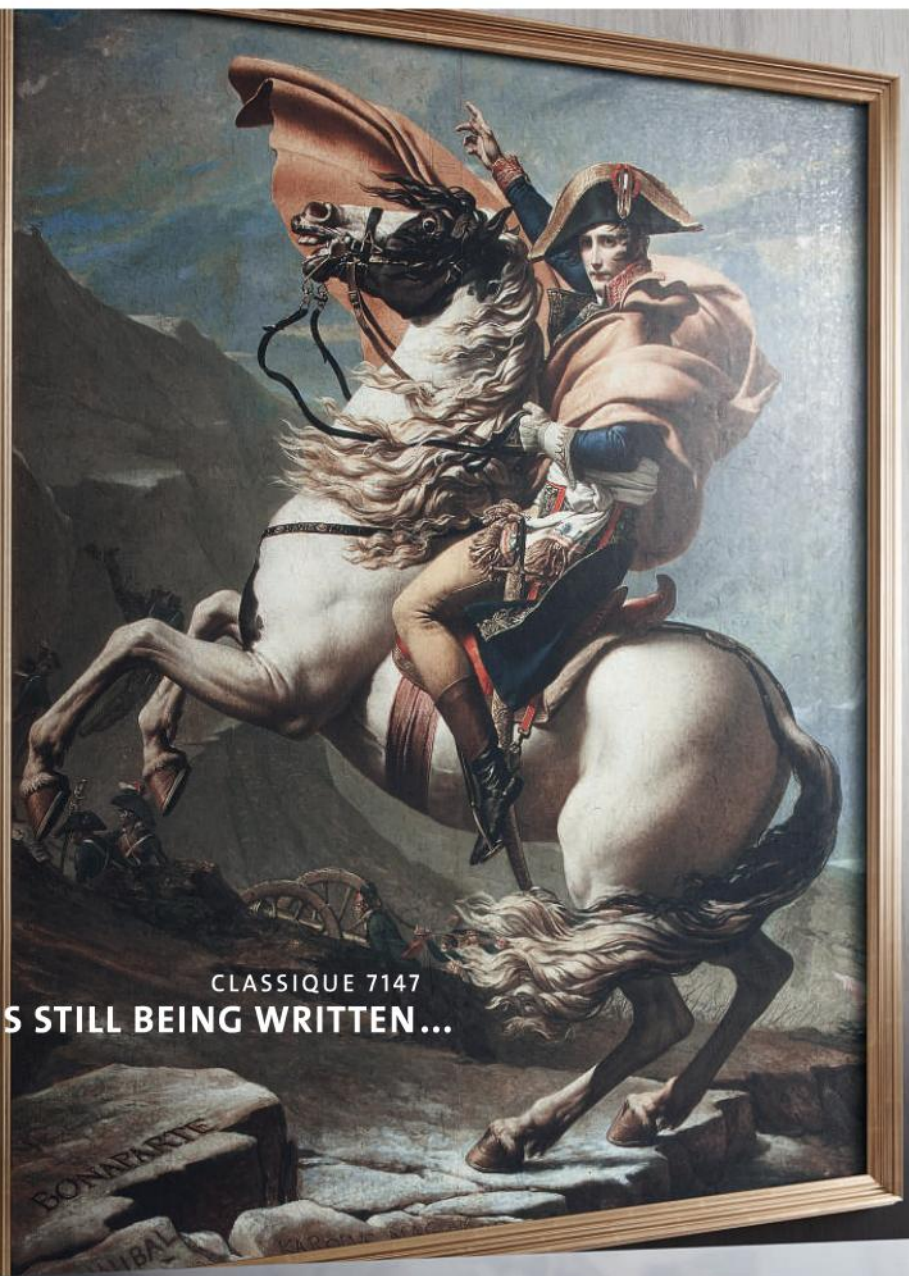






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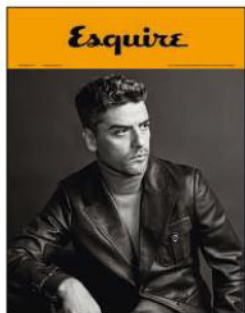
Photograph

David Slijper

Grey Shetland wool coat, £2,450;
grey lambswool V-neck jumper,
£385; grey wool trousers, £525,
all by Prada

Subscribers'

Dark brown leather
jacket, £2,065; camel
cashmere roll-neck, £880,
both by Prada



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Design and architecture expert Tom Dyckhoff on why men don't talk about interior decor

Tom Dyckhoff

"In my line of work I get a lot of men sidling up to me," says *Esquire* debutant Dyckhoff, who writes about men's attitudes to interiors this issue. "They have a sheepish look on their face, a look of shame. They tell me, in a whisper, that they like interior design. They like throws, cushions, wallpaper, even paint swatches. Men of the world: I absolve you from guilt. Real men love cushions." Dyckhoff is a lecturer, writer and broadcaster on architecture and design.

Stephen Bayley

"No-one wants to be told they have bad taste," says the noted design commentator. "Why? Because it's the very last frontier of shame. People today are fearless about discussing sex and money. But what you wear and where you live cruelly reveal more of your soul than your romantic habits or net worth." Bayley chronicles the most infamous instances of poor taste on page 170. His book, *Taste: The Secret Meaning of Things* (Circa), is out now.

Johnny Davis

"Nobody pays for music any more," says *Esquire's* deputy editor. "Instead they spend on headphones to play it through: the market will be worth £14bn by 2022. Newcomer Master & Dynamic has established itself as a serious player by behaving more like a design brand than an audio company, and after two days tailing dynamo CEO Jonathan Levine in New York, it's not hard to see why they've succeeded." Read Davis' report on page 154.

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Giles Coren

The *Esquire* editor at large was never a car fancier, much to his late father's disappointment. What to do now that his son is showing signs of petrolheadishness? "I've always thought that anyone who is really into cars must be either four years old or a retard of some sort," says Coren. "At the moment, my son can claim the first excuse, but what if his vroom vroom obsession pushes on into adulthood?" Coren is a TV presenter, author and columnist for *The Times*.

Peter Ainsworth

Among many other duties, *Esquire's* art director masterminds our fashion shoots. For this issue that included photographer Daniel Stier's unusual still-life pictures of manbags, featuring all manner of illicit contraband. "For years I have tried to shoehorn a snake or an octopus into a fashion shoot," admits Ainsworth. "Turns out a list of banned substances was the angle I always needed." You can see the reptilian results on page 174.

Miranda Collinge

In addition to editing the Culture section and commissioning stories across the magazine, this month *Esquire's* features editor went to New York to interview our cover subject, *Star Wars* fighter pilot Oscar Isaac. "We talked movies, music and mothers over a teapot of bone broth," says Collinge. "Despite his penchant for questionable beverages, Isaac proved to be excellent company." Read about Collinge's encounter with the Resistance on page 108.

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Editor's Letter

WHY DON'T MEN'S MAGAZINES cover interior design?

Not long ago I received an email from Tom Dyckhoff, the architecture and design expert, asking that question. We'd never met or corresponded before but I knew Tom from his stuff in the papers and on TV, where he enthuses about cities and buildings and the people who make them. Now he's writing a book about men at home and he was curious to know why it is that that subject is almost entirely absent from magazines such as *Esquire*.

Tom's email gave me pause. Why *don't* men's magazines cover interior design? I mean, it's true that in the less sophisticated publication for the more simple-minded chap, one does still occasionally see a page devoted to how to construct (not decorate, "construct") the "ultimate" bachelor pad, all black leather and polished chrome, and sad and lonely empty space, with a fuck-off TV (the "ultimate" fuck-off TV, probably) and no books, as if we were all still Patrick Bateman wannabes, and it was still 1991. But that's about it. Even in the grand bazaar of luxury lifestyle shopping options that is *Esquire*, one rarely sees so much as a rug or a lamp or even a decent chair. We just don't seem to be at home to ceramics or embroidery or tableware.

Where's the interiors porn? That's what Tom Dyckhoff wanted to know. And he must have thought he'd come to the right place, asking me. But I'm embarrassed to say I hadn't a clue.

Oh, I tried to mount some sort of defence, of course I did. I pointed to *The Big Black Book*, our biannual publication about all things design. And I sent Tom some issues of that organ, full of Q&As with Brutalist starchitects and still-lives of minimalist vases and essayistic examinations of obscure Benelux architecture practices. But while it's certainly a magazine, and it is primarily aimed at men, the *BBB* is not really a men's mag at all, at least in the sense the term is commonly understood. So I was baffled. At length, Tom and I met for tea, and continued the conversation.

Is it, he wondered, because furniture and interiors companies don't generally advertise in men's mags, in the way that fashion labels and watch brands and car marques and fragrance houses do? I scratched my head. I didn't think so. We cover lots of areas where there's no ad money on the table, as of course we should — sport and politics and books and TV and art and music and more — so that can't be it.

Alex Bilmes



Even in the grand bazaar of luxury lifestyle shopping options that is Esquire, one rarely sees so much as a rug, or a lamp, or even a decent chair. We just don't seem to be at home to ceramics or embroidery or tableware

Is it because men don't care about their surroundings? I stroked my chin. No, it can't be that. I don't pretend to any decorating expertise but I am as susceptible to beauty, and ugliness, as anyone I know. I definitely care what stuff goes in my house. And so do plenty of men I know. We just don't talk about it. (Except for the graphic designers, Tom pointed out. And, of course, he was right about that.)

Is it because, even among supposedly urbane men who will happily chew your ear off about their diets and where they get their hair cut and their exercise routines, the idea of admitting to an interest in interior design is still somehow wussy? Like confessing to making Pinterest mood boards or touring country churches or reading Jojo Moyes, instead of going to the football and the pub and playing *Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare*? I stuck my finger in my ear and wiggled it violently, as if clearing a blockage. I suppose that *could* be the case, but surely we're past all that, us 21st-century men of the world?

Tom and I kicked all this around for a bit — or perhaps we sensitively arranged all this in an elegant display for a bit — and then I suggested that he write about it. You can read his thoughts on the "weird taboo" of men taking an interest in our homes on page 126.

Tom's story, I hope, acts as an attractive centrepiece for this special issue, where masculine design classics — an Anglepoise lamp, an Eames chair, a vintage Aston Martin — jostle for space with products that are perhaps more unexpected, given what we know about men's mags and interior design: a fruit bowl, wooden dolls, a jug, and a rather fetching Balenciaga purse-thing.

The purse-thing, perhaps, is a step too far for you. It wouldn't work with your own Aston. Or perhaps you're a Tesla man? It's all a question of taste, isn't it? Stephen Bayley has recently published a book on that subject and here gives us his top 10 moments that taste forgot. (Look away now, Donald J Trump.) The rest of the issue, you'll agree, displays only the rarest discernment, from the properties sold by The Modern House to Haider Ackermann's designs for Berluti.

Next month, I suspect, normal service will resume: beer, burgers, ballgames and not even the sniff of a man-candle to brighten up your basement. Or maybe the genie is out of the bottle now, and it'll be antique chaise longues and occasional tables and five ways to add some sparkle to your sideboard. But I wouldn't bet on it. ■



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Self Examination

Each issue, Esquire commissions an unsparing inspection of Will Self's body. This month: nipples



IT'S A HAUNTING IMAGE, one that's clung to my vulnerable psyche for my entire adult life, flickering across my inner-vision at times of unease and mounting hysteria. Which is surprising, considering it wasn't me who saw it in the first place, but a girlfriend of mine, who, for the purposes of this history, we'll call... Ella. In the fashion of the time, and in common with all existentially-minded inhabitants of the inner city, Ella wore stretchy black clothes and made small, enigmatic sculptures out of Tippex and pipe cleaners. We drank warm vodka and coupled on the bare-board floors of squats and the perished linoleum of council flats; until Ella left for Turkey with her real boyfriend, who was trying to do something in sensory deprivation tanks. Ella returned a month or so later, bringing with her a small, tightly-packed, sausage-sized roll of the finest tobacco it's ever been my pleasure to smoke — and the hideous vision.

In some backwater, sand-blasted town on the wrinkled periphery of the great Anatolian plateau, Ella had visited a hammam. She stripped naked, and was vigorously kneaded and pummelled — you know the form — then led into the steam room and lain out to be blanched. Another woman was face down, naked, on the stone ledge beside her. After a while, the woman rose; she was perfectly ordinary and of unexceptionable appearance, Ella recounted, except for this one deformity: "She had no nipples." I bridled at the time — I'm bridling yet. I still, decades later, cannot — will not — accept this uncanny vision. Had Ella had an obstructed view? Surely the visibility was poor in the steam room? How about evidence of surgery? →

Self Examination

But no, Ella remained emphatic: her view had been unobstructed, the visibility was excellent, while moreover, the woman had pirouetted in a beam of light which fell from a lunette window overhead, turning this way and that, so that her breasts swung free: "They were quite smooth, all over, with no sign of anything remotely resembling an aureole — let alone a teat," said Ella.

The thing was, I may've bridled — and be bridling still — but that was only because knowing Ella as I did, I couldn't for a second doubt her testimony. The first time I met her, I'd just been handed a bowl of trifle, and peering speculatively at the yellow morass, she'd said: "That'll be easy to throw up later." And so it proved. Anyway, I've never for a nanosecond worried that a woman's vagina might contain a full set of molars, incisors and a quartet of canines, while remaining ever-haunted by the possibility that I, too, may one day meet my unmaker — the woman-with-no-nips.

I'm pretty sure a psychoanalyst would have plenty to say about this; while I also can acknowledge the Gordian knotting of the erotic and the maternal that subsists — like a currant buried in blancmange — in my tortured unconscious. I was born — see *Esquire* passim — with a congenital hernia, and spent the first six weeks of my life in a cage-like cot in Charing Cross Hospital, with a sign hung from its bars (or so my mother assured me later) that read, "Nil by mouth". Go figure. Am I a "breast man"? I'm reminded of the old Woody Allen gag about Picasso: "He began breaking her body down into its basic geometrical shapes, until the police arrived." The very idea smacks of a fetishism we'd all, surely, like to be absolved of, or otherwise delivered?


And yet... and yet... what is a breast without a nipple? Note the almost obsessive concentration, in pornography, on the nipple of the female breast. Heterosexual men invest the nipple with all the eroticism that might more properly belong, not only to the breast, but to the entire, glorious woman, her body, mind and soul. Such is the grotesque and deathly cluster-fuck of modern media-tisation: "Beyoncé's Bra Boob!" swelling from the screen, her exposed nipple a black hole into which all love disappears. Forever. Yes, yes, I understand the biology, the ingathering of nerve endings to the D-cup data centre, but neither man or woman is reducible to *this*.

We are more than what we slobber over, lick, then nip between our pursed lips while flicking with our tongues, and otherwise... eat. No! Let me state my case here: down with such tawdry parcelling-off of the female form! Down with the

Am I a 'breast man'? I'm reminded of the old Woody Allen gag about Picasso: 'He began breaking her body down into its basic geometrical shapes, until the police arrived'

fetishisation and commoditisation of the female body! Let the polymorphously perverse replace the pornographically standardised, and let the nipple-less woman dance forever in the beam of light that falls from a lunette window overhead; let her dance, most of all, dear reader, because that nipple-less woman... c'est moi.

And you as well — if you're a heterosexual man. It's a worse than zero-sum game, this objectifying gaze of ours; and even as it endows the female nipple with the sinister power to drive us mad, so it deprives our own of any sensation they might possess. Yes, it's us who're humiliated possessors of the proverbial two gnats on an ironing board, us who feel compelled — even unto late middle age, nowadays — to strut about the place with our chests bared, and our top bollocks jiggling. Things could be so much better if our lives weren't punctuated by these excruciatingly prolonged moob-boobs; if instead, we covered them up in satin, lace and silk (or leather and steel, if that's the way you roll).

Our lives would be that much *fuller*, too, if we invested our nipples with just a fraction of their sisters' erogeneity. "Why oh, why," I moan plaintively, as I stare down at my neglected nips, "hast I abandoned thee?" The biblically orotund being the way I habitually address my own body parts. Or at least, I used to so moan. I don't want to gross you out, but in recent times I've been, um... examining my breasts, with the assistance of a friend, and while they take considerable coaxing — and will certainly never achieve much salience — I'd like to inform you, dear readers, that my nipples are fully capable of becoming erect. And I'd like you to hold that image — not the one of the nipple-less woman — in your minds until next month. 



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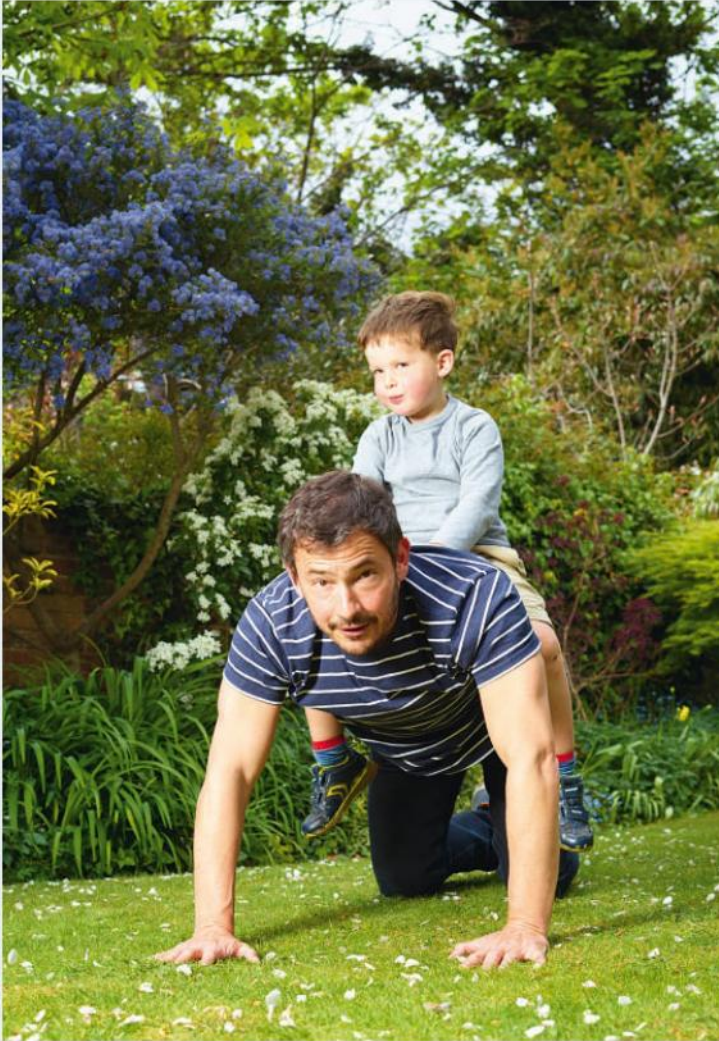
THE NEW FRAGRANCE



Man & Boy

Giles Coren on fathers (him) and sons (Sam, aged four).

This month: driven to distraction



I AM ONLY BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND, 10 years after his death, how much my father wanted his relationship with me to be about cars. That is to say, our relationship was partly about cars, but not in the way he would have liked. And so when it comes to my own son, and the way that we talk about cars, I do desperately want to get it right.

Cars were incredibly important to my dad. He was born at a time when, although cars were theoretically more expensive than they are today, getting hold of one and driving it was much easier for a young man that it is now, because the MoT test had not yet been invented. In his first year at university

in 1956, my father, a scholarship boy on the full government grant of £300 a year, was able to buy a 1935 Morris Oxford with his friend Jon Rayman for £10, each of them spending roughly a week's maintenance money, which today would be around £100.

In 2017, obviously, you cannot buy a car fit to pass an MoT for £200. Nor could you for £10 in 1955, but you could buy one that wasn't and happily drive it around until it conked out, at which point, having very little money, you poked it about until it worked again and then drove it some more. (The Oxford, Jon tells me, "could only be started by cranking because the starter motor failed early on; there was a nasty cotter pin so placed that as the car started, the crank handle came free, and you couldn't help tearing your hand on the pin.")

In doing this, my father, and a whole generation of men, learned not only how to mend a car but pretty much how to strip one down and build it again. And in doing that, they developed a feeling for those vehicles that was tantamount to love: indeed my father was as appalled by the intrusiveness of the MoT, when it came along, as he would have been by a municipal audit that sought to tell him whether or not his wife was fit to keep for another year.

My father talked endlessly about the cars of his youth: the Wolseleys and the Alvises, his own father's eight-seater Armstrong Siddeley, the Austin-Healey 3000 (number plate 800 HOO) that he brought me home in from the hospital and then had to sell when I was big enough to need a seat of my own, something for which he never truly forgave me, despite replacing it with the only royal blue, right-hand drive Mercedes-Benz 220SE convertible ever built (he claimed).

Soon after buying that beautiful car, he manually altered the registration from BEC 21C (indicating a 1965 purchase) to BEC 21G (1969) because not only did he care deeply about his car but he cared deeply about what other people thought about his car. To which end, he never let so much as a scratch remain on a motor of his for more than an hour. Every hair-line imperfection was T-Cutted till it looked like new, every dent hammered out, every thumb-print polished away.

And then I came along. And I didn't give a shit. And he didn't help me to give a shit when it came time for me to learn to drive, by refusing to let me so much as touch his precious car, by then a red BMW 325i convertible. There was no borrowing it to take chicks →

Man & Boy

to the drive-in, like in the movies. No male bonding of that order at all.

Instead, much wealthier than his own father, my dad bought me a 10-year-old maroon Ford Escort MkII for £800 to learn in (number plate BOY 434T) and I was very grateful, of course. But his attempts to teach me to drive in it were catastrophic, consisting of nothing but furious incomprehension that I couldn't drive already and an insistence on using the post-war motoring terminology of his youth. He'd sit in the passenger seat, smoking furiously and yelling, "Throw out the clutch!" And, "Give her plenty of throttle!"

And I'd wonder, "How can you throw out a pedal? What is a throttle? Is it that thing my funny little man from the BSM calls the 'gas pedal'?"

At every shanked gear change and stall my old man would yell, "It's just a case of disengaging the clutch plate from the blah blah blah fuel into the carburettor blah blah mixture blah blah explosions in the cylinder blah blah pistons blah blah driveshaft..."

And I'd go, "That's all very well, Dad, but if it's so easy then how come you've got an automatic?"

This was a touchy area with him because he though automatics were for girls and believed that a car should be driven hard and manually as if it were only one step up from a horse. And yes, his Beemer was automatic. But he claimed it was what the company car pool system had landed him with and he drove everywhere with his hand hovering over the impotent automatic lever like Jackie Stewart at Le Mans, as if just about to change one of the non-existent manual gears, roaring off up our quiet suburban street at ridiculous speeds, with the roof down and three fags in his mouth, cackling like Mr Toad...

The first time I pranged the Escort, he shouted, "WHYYYYY???" And ran out into the road in his dressing gown to look at the small dent in the metal bumper and all but weep for the damage done to its soul. He got in to drive it to the garage to get the mark beaten out and as he fired it up he said, "How long has the engine been running on like this?"

Like what?

"Can't you hear that engine note? It's dieselling!"

"Eh?"

"For God's sake, son, what do they teach you in that posh school? The fuel is igniting spontaneously in the combustion chambers without a blah blah blah you need to adjust the blah blah blah, it's very simple you just blah blah blah... why don't you take more care?"

He just couldn't understand that I didn't want to tinker, wasn't curious about how it worked. Failed to grasp that I was the spoilt son of a rich man who got given a car (three cars, in the end, another Ford and then an MGB for my 21st) and just drove it until it stopped working and then called the AA, whose

Unlike my daughter, who learned to read and write early, likes to draw, dance, sing, play music and cook, all Sam is interested in, at going on five now, is cars

diagnosis was usually that it had run out of petrol.

And the first time I had a really quite big smash, I called to tell him and he said, "Oh my God! In the MG? Is it OK?" And I said, "I'll tell you when they let me out of hospital." And he said, "Good, OK, because I can get it booked in for you at that place in Willesden."


So I always swore I would try to have a healthier "car relationship" with any future son of my own. I'd be cool, toss him the keys of whatever I was driving when the time came, and never task him with fully comprehending and then explaining back to me the workings of the internal combustion engine.

And then Sam (named after his Armstrong Siddeley-driving great-grandfather) came along. And unlike my daughter, who learned to read and write early, likes to draw, dance, sing, play music and cook, all Sam is interested in, at going on five now, is cars.

He has perhaps 500 of them from minuscule to almost fully drivable. He spends his days creating traffic jams in the kitchen, watching videos of monster trucks, motorbike stunts and car crashes. At the local farm park, while my daughter handles chicks and milks goats, Sam drives a small electric tractor round and round a circuit for six hours at a stretch. When it stops, he gets out, sighs, pushes it over to the wall, plugs it back in and tells me, "It's electric, Dad, we need a petrol one. Except tractors don't run on petrol, they run on diesel, which is when the fuel vapour ignites without a spark and means you get to go further without running out and you can put red diesel in it but then you can't drive it on the road or the police will put you in prison."

And then we drive home in our old Land Rover Defender and Sam says, "Dad, what's this little extra gear stick over here? Dad, is it always four-wheel-drive or just when you go in mud? Dad, why does it make that horrible noise when you change gear? Are you doing it wrong? Dad, how come it's so good at pulling heavy things but doesn't go very fast?"

And I feel a shame I haven't felt in 30 years when I tell him, I don't know. I don't know any of those things. So I have sworn to try to give Sam the car life my dad wanted to give me. I'll take him out onto the fields in the Defender (which he calls "Rosie the Rover") as soon as he is tall and strong enough to "throw out" the merciless clutch, and he can be driving it to the local pub by the time he is 14, and be one of those boys. And when he's 17, I'll get him something rusty of his own and he can spend his life underneath it, ignoring his schoolbooks.

The Coren love of cars has unquestionably skipped a generation and it moves me deeply to see in Sam that excitement at the sight, smell and sound of automobiles that I never felt myself. I only wish his grandfather were around to tell him how they work. 



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THE ITALIAN BEAUTY

THE FOP

A velvet jacket in a jewel shade teamed with a silk shirt, flowing trousers and patent loafers is every bit the dress code for a second night on the trot.

Comfortable, elegant and a bit sleazy (in a good way), throw on a classic bow tie, and slink into the party like well-dressed syrup.

Emerald velvet blazer, £2,530; cream silk shirt, £1,065; black viscose/satin trousers, £900; black patent leather loafers, £890, all by Tom Ford. Black silk bow tie, £60, by Richard James

Dirty Martini

Recipe: Agostino Perrone, director of mixology, The Connaught; the-connaught.co.uk

Ingredients: 60ml Tanqueray No 10 Gin; 10ml homemade dry vermouth (equal parts Martini Extra Dry, Gancia Bianco and Noilly Prat); 10ml olive brine; olives to garnish

Esquire Style

Fashion / Grooming / Tech / Food / Cars

Edited by Teo van den Broeke

FASHION

Formal service will be resumed

Event season is back and conventional black tie just won't do. Get the parties started with elegant, modern evening wear and a classic cocktail to hand — the rest is down to you

THE MAVERICK



Old Fashioned

Recipe: Ali Reynolds, World Class GB 2015 winner

Ingredients: 60ml Bulleit Bourbon; 5ml 2:1 sugar syrup (2 parts caster sugar; 1 part warm water); dash of Angostura bitters; ice; orange zest to garnish

THE SHOW OFF



Gimlet

Recipe: Jamie Jones, World Class GB 2017 winner

Ingredients: 60ml Tanqueray No 10 Gin; 25ml lime cordial; ice; fresh lime slice to garnish

A white tuxedo jacket worn with a classic poplin shirt and a satin bow tie in a dark shade is an easy enough look to pull off; but pair the aforementioned jacket and shirt combo with an on-trend Western bow tie, and the look suddenly makes a whole new level of statement.

Cream silk sports coat, £1,395; black silk Western bow tie, £105; white poplin shirt, £105; black silk trousers, £580, all by Ralph Lauren Purple Label. Black velvet slippers, £480, by Ralph Lauren

Silk jacquards, bold patterns and statement jackets are not for the faint of heart, but worn correctly, with a smart roll-neck, for instance, you will be the talk of the party (in the best way). Savile Row stalwart Gieves & Hawkes, perhaps unsurprisingly, is the place to start.

Red silk jacket, £1,495; black wool trousers, £245, both by Gieves & Hawkes. Black merino wool roll-neck, £150, by John Smedley. Black patent leather-satin loafers, £475, by Jimmy Choo

THE SPORTY ACCESSORISER

**Negroni**

Recipe: Dustin MacMillan,
brand manager, Hix;
hixrestaurants.co.uk

Ingredients: 25ml No 3 London
Dry Gin; 25ml Antica Formula
Vermouth; 25ml Campari; 1 large
round, clear ice ball or sphere;
1 half (moon-shaped) slice
of blood orange to garnish

MONSIEUR MINIMAL

**Bloody Mary**

Recipe: Brian Silva, bar manager,
Balthazar; balthazarlondon.com

Ingredients: 50ml vodka; 250ml
V8 juice and passata mix (combine
2l V8 and 250ml passata); 2 lemon
wedges; 1 lime wedge; 1 tbsp of
Worcestershire sauce; 1 tsp green
Tabasco sauce; ½ tsp celery seed;
fresh horseradish; bacon (optional)
and a celery stick to garnish

In these days of tie-free dress codes and tracksuits at the pub, it's hardly surprising that it's more acceptable (even encouraged) to team a tux with sporty separates. So long as the suit is cut immaculately, a knitted polo worn buttoned up with trainers can look the business.

Black wool tuxedo, £2,200; black wool long-sleeved polo shirt with orange striped ribbing, £580; black leather-suede trainers, £470, all by Dior Homme

It might seem perverse to suggest doing black tie without a tie, but a beautiful velvet tuxedo with a T-shirt and matching waistcoat can look louche, Gallic and a little bit dangerous (for all the right reasons). If it's minimal Parisian savoir faire you're after, look no further than Berluti.

Midnight blue velvet smoking jacket, £3,250; midnight blue velvet waistcoat, £500; black cashmere T-shirt, £420; midnight blue velvet tuxedo trousers, £870; black leather boots, £1,350, all by Berluti



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CARS

THE DRIVE
by Will Hersey

Look, keine Hände!

With smartphone-controlled parking and traffic jam pilot, Audi's tech-driven A8 joins the luxury-driverless charge

Despite our technological advances, the world in 2017 still holds many mysteries: the construction of Stonehenge, the nature of dark matter, the pricing of cinema popcorn. In the motoring world, however, the most prescient unknown has been exactly how and when all this talk of driverless cars will actually become a reality so that we can spend even more time in our day deleting emails instead of shouting at other drivers and making a hash of parallel parking.

Except, just when you'd decided it was so far in the future as to be less relevant than a Mars property brochure, a mainstream car stealthily arrives on the scene — right now — which can actually, you know, drive itself about a bit. When I say mainstream, a £70,000, five-metre-long limousine is admittedly a bit too “silver-haired-chairman-on-his-way-into-town-for-the-biannual-board-

meeting-before-his-cardiac-check-up” for most of us to actually think about buying. But if there's one thing we know about industry flagships like the Audi A8, BMW 7 Series and Mercedes-Benz S-Class it's that a brand new model is like a giant sharing platter of the very latest auto-tech around, the leftovers of which will eventually be handed out to every other car on the road including, eventually, your little sister's Citroën Saxo. They're like a small curtain twitch into the very near future so it pays to take notice.

And the headline story here is that through a combination of lidar, radar, myriad sensors and hi-res cameras, Audi's AI traffic jam pilot can steer, accelerate and brake on its own at speeds of up to 37mph, while you do pretty much anything you want (this car also has a TV and a foot massager to give you a couple of early suggestions). Probably best not to have



Future proofing: an A8 on the Audi assembly line in Neckarsulm near Stuttgart. Below: the A8's cabin and design has had a major upgrade





Back seat driving: besides AI motion systems, the latest A8 has a TV, touchscreens and a foot massager

'Smart' is overused but this car deserves it more than most

CALL THE AI

Audi's current main smart car rivals

Mercedes

Its S-Class can steer itself to stay in lane and also switch lanes on request. S350d AMG Line, £72,205



Tesla

The brand's Autopilot was one of the first self-driving systems in production. Model S, £56,400



BMW

It is working with Intel on building a fleet of autonomous 7 Series test cars. 730d xDrive, £67,940



a snooze though because when traffic picks up you're going to be needed again quite swiftly.

This feature, according to Audi, makes it the first "Level 3" autonomous car on the road (where one is a traditional car and five is fully autonomous). Audi chief executive Rupert Stadler has used the phrase "25th hour" to describe all the extra time we can find when driverless cars hit their potential, particularly handy when you've only just started rewatching *The Sopranos*.

There's a fairly juicy caveat here of course, that this technology will only be accessible when and if the laws of the land approve it and that debate is very much ongoing. Here, it may not be until 2019 that Audi can start to consider a roll-out. But that doesn't lessen the importance of laying down a marker on its German rivals in a race that is fast becoming more competitive than the Glasgow Ice Cream Wars.

There are a few neat AI features available straight away. Parking pilot lets you instruct the car to park itself via your phone app — while you're standing outside. It works the other way, too, meaning you can

summon it like an overworked valet. Less flashy but equally impressive; if you try to open a door when a cyclist is passing, it'll physically keep the door closed to prevent a wipe-out. And when the A8 detects another car is close to hitting your side, it can adjust and even strengthen itself to minimise the impact. The word "smart" is overused, but this car deserves it more than most. And perhaps scarily, it could even learn from Audi's collective fleet intelligence to keep getting even smarter.

In the film *I, Robot*, our driverless motoring future is already mapped out. We will enjoy a period of semi-autonomous driving with the facility of driver involvement, before being attacked in a tunnel by an army of renegade robots. So we may as well enjoy those foot massages wherever and whenever we can get them. audi.co.uk

Audi A8 50 Tdi Quattro

Engine	3.0-ltr V6 turbo diesel
Power	282bhp
0-62mph	5.9secs
Top speed	155mph
Economy	50.4mpg
Price	£69,100

FASHION

Moves like Jacko

White socks are back — here's the three best ways to wear them. Shamone!



Like the King of Pop

OK, so crystal-encrusted socks may be taking it a step too far, but bunched-up, white tube socks worn with black snaffle loafers and cropped trousers will look dangerous.

Dark grey/pink wool trousers, £665; white wool socks, £225; black leather horsebit loafers, £490, all by Gucci



Like a 17th-century aristocrat

Off the wall but effective. Pick fine gauge silk socks in sparkling white, hike them up high and wear with a tuxedo and jazzy slip-ons (we'd choose Jimmy Choos). It will add a regal edge to your black tie get-up.

Black wool-mohair trousers, £245, by Gieves & Hawkes. White cotton socks, £14, by Pantherella. Black patent leather loafer, £450, by Jimmy Choo



Like a dude

White socks surfer-style are great in summer but easily translate to winter. Team ribbed socks with red or blue stripes with cut-off jeans, Vans skate shoes and an inside-out shearing jacket for peak Stateside slick.

Blue denim jeans, £205, by Beams @ Mr Porter. White/red cotton socks, £3.50, by Topman. Cream canvas trainer, £55, by Vans @ Mr Porter



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The Kooples

PARIS



FOOD

THE ACCIDENTAL COOK
Russell Norman

ROAST CHICKEN

For excellent results, turn this favourite dinner on its head using our man's elementary, failsafe trick

There is a persistent myth that cookbooks, particularly those from famous restaurants, are full of white lies; that the recipes are never quite the same as in the places they originate. The supposition is that by changing an ingredient or by withholding some small but significant detail, the chef will protect their creation so that no one else will ever make it as well as he or she does. It is nonsense, of course. But with high-profile controversies like The River Café's Chocolate Nemesis recipe (many complained that the cookbook was wrong; Ruth Rogers and Rose Gray insist that any failing was due to user error) culinary conspiracy theorists will continue to point the finger.

In my experience, the opposite is true. Chefs are generous types and always seem keen to pass on tricks-of-the-trade. I struggled for years, for example, to get my boiled eggs just right. I want my yolk to be very runny, but I hate it when the white is still transparent and wobbly, with the viscosity and appearance of snot. I had never found a foolproof way of achieving

Sunday best: our culinary connoisseur's ultimate roast chicken stuffed with lemon and herbs



'When the weather turns cold, this dish always fits the bill'



Steel 8in wooden handled carving knife, £260, by Blok Knives; blok-knives.co.uk





JAMES FRANCO *Introducing* The NEW FRAGRANCE *for* MEN



COACH

NEW YORK





FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

consistently good results until I came across Simon Hopkinson's method. He requires that you use a saucepan with a glass lid. You put the eggs into the pan with cold water, and when it starts to boil, you remove the pan from the heat. Keeping the lid on, you wait for three-and-a-half minutes, and then take them out. Perfect soft-boiled eggs, every time.

Which brings me, in a chicken-and-egg sort of way, to this month's recipe, the last in my year of absolute




Russell Norman is the founder of Polpo and Spuntino; Instagram: @russell_norman; russellnorman.net



Fowl play: deliciously moist poultry and goose fat-glazed potatoes make up this exemplary British classic

classics: roast chicken. When the weather turns cold, we want warming comfort food, and this dish always fits the bill.

It was only recently, however, that I realised I'd been doing it wrong for years. It was the chef Florence Knight who pointed out the error of my ways.

"Always roast a chicken upside down," she told me. By putting the bird in the oven with the breast at the bottom, legs at the top, all the juices run through the chicken, into the breast, keeping the roast deliciously moist. It was a revelation. You'll also find you don't need gravy, just a decent mound of crispy roast potatoes. 



GROOMING

How to smell like a Norse god

A powerful, ultra-masculine new fragrance takes no prisoners

According to James Craven, the man behind specialist perfumer Les Senteurs, those who wear Viking need to be man enough that it "doesn't end up wearing them". So, we wore it around the *Esquire* office to gauge our masculinity. One female colleague said "it reminded her of love's young dream", while another said it was "quite gentlemanly". None tore our clothes off, but equally none said "get away from me you foul smelling simp", either. So we'll chalk that up as a win.

The fragrance combines dense masculine notes of patchouli and sandalwood with fizzier strains of bergamot and pink peppercorn. Though the scent is inspired by "the incredibly crafted Viking longships", the haemoglobin-hued packaging is inspired by the legend that the Vikings would strew the bodies of vanquished enemies beneath said ships to more easily roll them into the water. (Make of that what you will.)

Viking, £185/50ml, by Creed; creedfragrances.co.uk

Upside-down roast chicken and potatoes

Serves four

Ingredients

- 1 free-range chicken, about 1.5kg
- 2kgs Maris Piper potatoes
- 1 lemon
- 1 large bunch mixed herbs: thyme, oregano, sage
- Large handful rosemary, leaves picked off
- Olive oil
- 2 heaped tbspsn goose fat
- Flaky sea salt
- Black pepper

Method

1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into large bite-sized pieces. Boil in a large pan of salted water for about 5mins until just starting to soften. Drain into a large colander and let them stand for 5mins. Shake the colander vigorously to bash up the potato edges. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C.

2. Rub the chicken all over with olive oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Cut the lemon in half and stuff it into the cavity, then plug with the mixed herbs. Place a large roasting tray on the bottom shelf of the oven and then put the chicken directly onto the middle shelf, breast-side down.

3. Roast for 30mins then turn. At the same time, put goose fat into the roasting tray and, when smoking, add potatoes. Coat well before returning to the oven.

4. Roast the chicken for a further 30mins. Next, remove the chicken, placing it breast up, onto a board and loosely cover with foil.

5. Turn the oven up to 225°C. Give the tray with the potatoes in a shake, adding a scatter of salt and the rosemary leaves, and roast for a further 15mins while the chicken rests. With a sharp carving knife, distribute the meat evenly among four plates. Serve with the golden potatoes.

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BORN TO DARE

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WATCHES

War time inheritance

History, heritage, presence and a low-level price: salute the military-styled Vertex M100

Founded in 1916 by British watchmaker Claude Lyons, Vertex was one of the original "dirty dozen" watches commissioned by the Ministry of Defence for military use (others include IWC, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Omega and Longines). Though Vertex continued producing its military-approved W.W.W. watches (the initialism stands for Wrist. Watch. Waterproof) for 56 years, the company was forced to shutter its Hatton Garden headquarters due to the global quartz crisis in watchmaking in 1972.

Today, the marque has a new lease of life in the hands of Lyons' great-grandson Don Cochrane, launching a new model, the M100, inspired by its wartime forerunner the W.W.W. Cal 59 from 1944. A mechanical timepiece housed in a pleasingly compact 40mm case, the watch has an on-beat vintage feel, comes available on various straps (though the authentic feeling khaki Nato is our favourite) and contains a top grade ETA 7001 movement. "The story of the M100 comes from the fields, skies and seas of WWII. The watches did truly important things during that period: from timing bombing runs and invasions to navigating through enemy territory and, of course, organising all important trips to the pub," says Cochrane of the marque he inherited.

"Now Vertex is re-entering the market with all of that authority behind it. Authority which gives the new M100 a soul you just would not get without that backstory."

Perhaps most interesting, though, is that for the past six months or so only around 600 watches have been offered for sale to a handful of customers personally selected by Cochrane. From this winter, however, a small number will become available to the public via selected retailers. It's a clever way of building interest in a timepiece which, with a £2,500 price tag, sits at the lower end of the luxury watch market.

To be in with a chance of bagging one yourself, visit the Vertex store in London's Marylebone in the new year, or express your interest online at its website. Action stations, men!



FASHION

DRAWING ATTENTION

This winter, designers are channelling Nineties 'toon stars



Craig Green does Inspector Gadget



Pringle of Scotland does Doug



Gucci does Butt-head



MSGM does Kenny



Steel M100 watch on grey nylon Nato strap, £2,500, by [Vertex Watches](#)

shopuk.hamiltonwatch.com



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FASHION

LOOK SHARP

Pointy shoes are back

This winter, wrinkle-picker boots (and shoes) are making an overdue return. Banish all images of court jester-esque loafers and banana-toed, lace-ups from your mind, these spiky suckers are heavy-soled, loaded with attitude and designed to be worn with sharply cut suits and separates. Overhauled by the likes of Berluti and Saint Laurent Paris, this season's new wave of wrinkle-picker boots are sexed up to the max. Still not convinced? Try these for size...

ANOTHER POINT TO CONSIDER...

The Palomino Blackwing pencil, once favoured by John Steinbeck, Stephen Sondheim and Chuck Jones. £30/12; palominobrands.com

Brown suede boots, £395, by Paul Smith

Brown leather boots, £725, by Saint Laurent Paris

Black leather boots, £625, by Jimmy Choo

Brown leather boots, £1,590, by Berluti

FOOD

Capital culinary arts

London's ICA now houses the latest Rochelle Canteen

Everyone wants to be part of Fergus and Margot Henderson's gang. The doyen and doyenne of London's foodies, Fergus is the mind behind Clerkenwell hotspot St John, while Margot oversees the Rochelle Canteen, the working week,

daylight-hours-only café at the Rochelle School artists community at east London's Arnold Circus.

Now Margot and business partner Melanie Arnold open a new outpost of the Rochelle Canteen at London's Institute of Contemporary Art. The space is clean and bright, and the hours far more social than those of the east London sister restaurant (the ICA Rochelle outpost is open every day except

Monday between 11am and 11pm).

The menu, unsurprisingly, is the star of the show. *Esquire* ate fat, deep-fried sprats with homemade tartare sauce; a squash, wild mushroom and barley broth (which soothed the soul as gently as any chicken soup), and melting braised rabbit. Just be sure to leave space for pudding.

The Mall, St James's, London SW1; arnoldandhenderson.com



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FASHION

HE WALKS IN BEAUTY

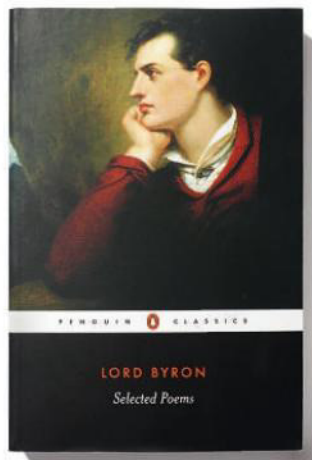
Make Lord Byron your winter style icon



Burberry
AW '17



Lord Byron Selected Poems,
£17; penguin.co.uk



1 | Blue/green/gold
tapestry printed
silk-wool scarf,
£245, by [Drake's](#)



2 | Brown leather
boots, £440, by
[Crockett & Jones](#)



Sir Robert
Peel (1850)

3 | Black doeskin-cotton
peacock embroidered
jacket, £7,475,
by [Alexander McQueen](#)



Alexander
McQueen
AW '17

Style



Two centuries before there was Instagram, and with it the current glut of perfectly Facetuned, muscle-bound man-children, there was Lord Byron. There's a famous circa 1835 Thomas Phillips painting of the original rock-star poet (see top left) hanging in the National Portrait Gallery. In it, Byron looks every bit the urbane Regency intellectual (not to mention totally 'gramable). He's wearing Albanian dress ("the most magnificent [attire] in the world" in Byron's words), standing proud and staring pensively into the middle distance (as all good poets/influencers must). Though the Balkan garb is impressive, it's really Byron's day-to-day wear that's piqued our interest lately. In other pictures, Byron can be seen wearing oversized, blousy white shirts, loosely-tied neck scarves and smart double-breasted layers. The look is laid-back yet tailored, romantic yet considered, and it feels very "now".

The zenith of the Regency period occurred in the first third of the 19th century, when Byron enjoyed peak public visibility. Men abandoned lace





FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

and over-embroidered garments. Trousers as we know them came in for the first time, coats were cut long and fitted while shirts were furnished with large, high collars. Other Regency style stars included prime minister Robert Peel and the future King George IV: the former had a rakish way with shirt collars; the latter had dreamy tousled hair.

The Regency look was first aped by London clubbers the Blitz Kids and bands led by Visage and Spandau Ballet in the Eighties. The movement was gender-fluid, dandyish and deeply fashion-oriented. This time around, there's a more understated take on the look — we first noticed it at the Paris and Milan menswear shows a few seasons ago — and for AW '17 the trend has distilled into day-to-day wearability.

At Burberry, oversized Regency dress coats, cut high in the arm, were teamed with tie-neck cotton shirts and featured brooch detailing on the lapels. At Korean label Wooyoungmi, models wearing shirts rippled with oversized ruffles and enormous collars, single earrings, velvet sweatpants and close-cut housecoats in the same fabrics. At Alexander McQueen, smoking jackets printed with peacock feathers were worn with shirts and cravats, the voluminous crisp white shirts with scarf-collar detailing giving the models a Byronic edge.

Wooyoungmi
AW '17



King George
IV (1810)



4 | Tartan cotton
baseball cap,
£195; white
cotton riding
shirt with
detachable brass
pin, £495; navy
pinstripe wool
trousers, £495,
all by Burberry



5 | Midnight blue velvet
waistcoat, £600, by Berluti



6 | Navy/brown
wool-cotton
shearling-lined
coat, £4,900,
by Armani

DRINKS

Spirit of America

A potent, rare cognac worth crossing the Atlantic for

Not really a cognac person? Then this is the cognac for you. Hennessy's Master Blender's Selection No 2, as the workman-like rectangular bottle might imply, tastes more like a bourbon; think vanilla, nutmeg and warming spice but with a luxuriously long finish. It's a limited, one-off production, but no-one's going to stop you if you sip it from a flask.

hennessy.com



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Peter George Banks Jewellers Kendal | Stephen Hughes Fine Diamonds Swansea | S.T. Hopper Boston

Shaven not stirred:
Roger Moore keeps
his razor sharp wits
about him, 1973

GROOMING

FACE TIME

A smoother shave is closer than you think — allow us to sharpen your technique

How many times have you shaved in your lifetime? Let's say you're in your mid-thirties. If you've shaved every weekday for the past 15 years, you've taken a razor to your chin almost 4,000 times.

But are you doing it right? And are the products you're using — the blades, the cream, the balm, the oil — right for your skin? Despite the abundance of shave subscription services on offer and a plethora of skincare products formulated to enhance how men shave, many men's grooming routines are still blighted by razor burns and sore skin.

To set the record straight, *Esquire* asked Richard Tucker, head of education at Ruffians barbers, for his clean-cut advice.

01. THE PREP

A good shave starts long before you lather up. Take a hot shower or splash your face with warm water, then use a facial scrub to exfoliate. "Take care around your eyes as the skin is thinner here and can get sore," says Tucker. "The exfoliation will help remove impurities and dead skin cells, and help stop ingrowing hairs."

—
Energising Face Scrub, £24/100ml, by Scrubd;
scrubd.com



02. THE OIL

Shaving oils have risen in prominence recently. "Once you've rinsed off the scrub apply an oil," says Tucker. "Don't rub it in, place a fine layer over the hair you're shaving. The oil lubricates the skin, helping to prevent razor burn."

—
Shave oil, £45/40ml, by Tom Ford;
mrporter.com



03. THE CREAM

When dry, men's facial hair can be tough, so it needs softening. The scrub and oil go some way but a rich lather lets a razor cut with minimum fuss. Avoid products in pressurised cans with chemical propellants. Go for a shaving cream or gel.

—
Sandalwood shave gel, £8/100ml, by Ruffians; ruffians.co.uk. Vitamin E shaving cream, £18/115g, by Malin + Goetz; malinandgoetz.co.uk



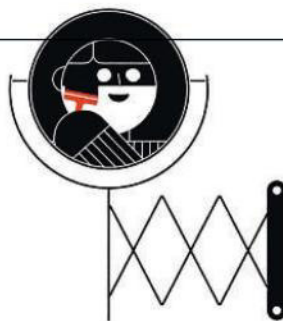
Oliver Spencer





04. THE TECHNIQUE

"Look at your hair closely in the mirror and plan your shave direction," suggests Tucker. "You want to shave in the same direction your hair grows. It's easy until you get to your neck where the hair can grow upwards or downwards or sometimes both. And don't shave over the same spot repeatedly! If you've got sensitive skin, you're going to get razor burn."



05. THE TIME



According to a Braun shaving study, the average man uses 300 razor strokes per shave, but if you do it right, you won't need that many. "If just starting out then give yourself 20-30mins shave time but if you've been doing it for a while, you're looking at 15mins max. It's important not to let your skin dry out during the shave. I recommend re-prepping the skin if you take longer than expected."

THE RAZOR

Tucker says: "I advise using Jagen David's E01 double-edge safety razor." Braun's Series 5 electric shaver can be used with cream, or in the shower, and it "reads" your beard density and adapts during the shave.

Series 5 shaver, £250, by Braun; braun.com; E01 razor, £13, by Jagen David; amazon.com

06. THE AFTERCARE

Rinse your face with cold water to refresh the skin and help pores close, then apply a light moisturiser or aftershave balm. "Some people recommend cologne as the alcohol in it will kill bacteria. But what about all the other chemicals in it? Unless you love pain, you're only going to make your skin flare up and look sore."

Post Shave Repair Gel, £24/125ml, by Kiehl's; kiehls.co.uk



THREE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES THAT MAKE THE CUT



HARRY'S

The one you will have spotted everywhere recently, Harry's offering includes its five-blade Truman razor, foaming shave gel and a travel blade cover.

From £3; harrys.com

CORNERSTONE

All of its products are free of alcohol, paraben and BPA (bisphenol A). Shaving heads are fitted with five carbon-coated blades and feature a strip of aloe vera for improved lubrication.

From £14; cornerstone.co.uk

DORCO

A service offering three shaving head options; one with three blades, one with four and, for the especially hirsute, a heavy-duty one with six.

From £1; razorsbydorco.co.uk

TECH

The best new apps this month



Gboard

No phone has become a laptop killer due to the limitations of the keyboard.

Gboard gets you closer: letting you drag words using "glide typing" and dictate large slices of text into whatever app you're using.

Android/iOS; free



Enlight Videoleap

The hugely popular photo-editing app has launched a video companion. There's a tonne of high-end features, including green screen use, colour correction and layering. Try for free, though the best options are paywall-protected.

iOS; free + IAP



SpaceHub

Real-time video feeds and GPS for the amateur space-enthusiast to track astronauts, rovers and space stations while aggregating industry tweets into a single feed.

Android; free



Esquire

The Big Watch Book



DIVE INTO THE 2017 ISSUE — OUT NOW

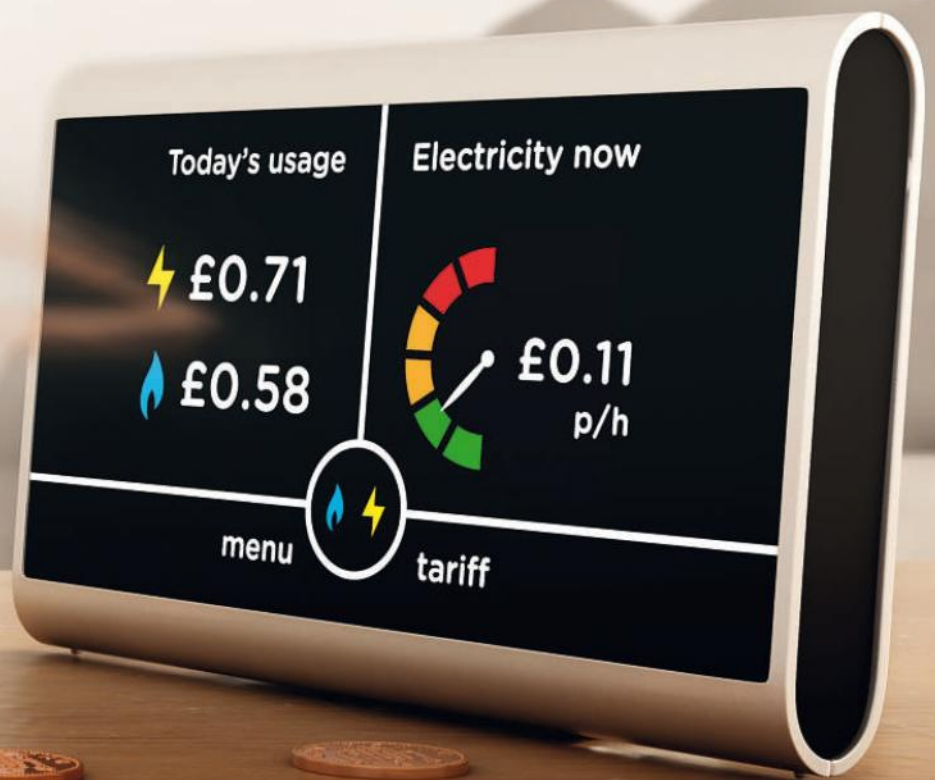
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FASHION

SHIP SHAPE

Born at sea, the pea coat makes a perfect fit for swashbuckling landlubbers

It was at the beginning of the 19th century when the Dutch navy first started issuing its sailors with "pijjakkers": hefty pea coats known for their insulating properties. Though the British transformed the pea coat from a specialised naval-issue garment into civvie wardrobe staple, it was across the Atlantic where the style ventured into popular culture. Steve McQueen wore one in 1966's *The Sand Pebbles*; Bob Dylan was regularly pictured wearing a navy piece in the Sixties; Pacino pulled a style blinder in *Serpico* (1973); while Robert Redford looked dashing

wearing one in 1975's *Three Days of the Condor*. Like all great menswear items, the coat has endured due to a combination of heritage, function and style. The original pea coats were designed to sit close to the body in order to protect sailors against the harsh conditions at sea. Today, the coats are flattering on the frame, comfortable to wear and practical in winter. Worn layered up with a chunky cream roll-neck or with a fine gauge forest green crew neck, this slim-cut classic navy style from Ralph Lauren will navigate you through foul weather with ease.



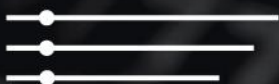
Navy wool pea coat, £2,150, by Ralph Lauren

Naval gazing: Al Pacino and Robert Redford in pea coats



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TRAVEL



THE BARBER DOSSIER
by Tom Barber

HARBOUR ISLAND

The tiny Bahamian island is making a big name for itself thanks to its promise of rum, relaxation and Instagram-ready beaches

When I was 16, I went on holiday outside Europe for the first time. Destination? Tiny Harbour Island in the Bahamas. Sipping beers on the terrace of our hotel overlooking a beautiful, three-mile long, pink sand beach, turquoise lagoon and reef beyond, was idyllic enough, but then it happened. One morning, a famous fashion photographer, his assistant, a stylist and five spectacular models traipsed onto the beach before me and proceeded to spend the next three days cavorting around in the shallows shooting a swimwear

special for an American glossy. Needless to say, I fell hard (in several manners of speaking) for Harbour Island, and so began my love affair with long-haul travel. And bikini-clad models on pink sand beaches. Nearly 30 (sigh) years on, the island may be more on the map — happily, the recent severe hurricanes in the region bypassed it without the appalling carnage meted out to many Caribbean neighbours — but it remains deliciously laid-back and the model quotient remains high. Go. Seriously.

Tom Barber is a founder of the award-winning travel company originaltravel.co.uk



See Harbour Island's sunset from Pink Sands Beach, left, with a Goombay Smash cocktail, right, to hand — the official tipple of the Bahamas

STAY

The new kid in old Dunmore Town, the island's "capital", is Bahama House dating from 1800, with just 11 suites in the colonial main home and a neighbouring property. The vibe is stylish and low-key, there is crab eggs Benedict for breakfast and the bar serves rare local rums. Tick. bahamahouseinn.com

LUNCH

Beach shack chic at its best, Sip Sip is a lunch-only joint overlooking *that* beach. Order lobster quesadilla, a local Kalik beer (named for the sound of cowbells played in Bahamian parades), kick back and you won't notice the garish lime green decor. sipsiprestaurant.com



DINE

Queen Conch (on Bay Street north of the dock) was another formerly lunchtime institution, famed for its conch salad, but is now open for supper. Conch curry is the evening dining speciality, again best washed down with a Kalik.

DRINK

It's a true testament to its effects that no-one in the Bahamas seems able to remember the definitive ingredients of the islands' official cocktail, the Goombay Smash. It's rummy and pineapple, and the best in Harbour Island is served frozen at Rock House Hotel and Restaurant. rockhousebahamas.com



Explore quaint Donmarr Town, left, by land before a spot of bonefishing, right, in the island's crystal clear waters

WHAT TO PACK



Super hydrating face cream, £41/118ml, by [Hampton Sun](#)



Blue/white linen beach towel, £95, by [Frescobol Carioca](#)



Blue lens tortoiseshell sunglasses, £255, by [Tomas Maier](#)



Grey suede-trimmed cashmere travel pillow, £745, by [Loro Piana](#)

PARTY

Daddy D's caters for locals and clued up off-islanders. But don't miss Gusty's for the chance to dance on a pink sand dancefloor, become truly "Goombay Smashed" and flip a coin into the DJ's tips bucket when he plays a good track.

SHOP

Dake's Shoppe sells a range of funky artisanal men's shirts from Indego Africa, designed in NYC and handmade in Africa. Be warned, your better half may spend several hours here during which time you can head next door to Arthur's Bakery (See "When In....") [dakesshoppe.com](#)

SEE

Tropical fish, turtles and eagle rays when snorkelling on either the amazing reef a couple of hundred feet offshore from the wonderful beach, or further afield at the Devil's Backbone, a treacherous (for larger boats) reef that keeps yachties and cruise ships at bay.

DO

Try catching a bonefish. To many anglers, it is the ultimate wet dream, fly-fishing in saltwater shallows for the large (3-7lbs), fierce, mirror-scaled fish that fight like blazes when hooked. The Bahamas is world famous for it and Harbour Island is a top habitat of the species.



WHEN IN...

Arthur's Bakery makes famously good banana pancakes, key lime pies, pastries and breads served by utterly charming husband and wife Robert and Anna Arthur. It's next to Dake's Shoppe (see "Shop"), so shop afterwards, or you may need to return for a larger shirt.

WHY NOW

Because Boxing Day and New Year's Day sees the islands celebrate Junkanoo, the National Festival of The Bahamas, an all-round carnival-style excuse to party hard everywhere. Obviously, it's a popular time to visit the island, so get booking.

AVOID

Calling it "Harbour Island", or worse, "Harbour". Locals use their truncated, island-style why-use-four-syllables-when-you-can-use-two? vernacular "Briland", rather brilliantly.



GET THERE

BA flies non-stop to Nassau, capital of the Bahamas, and it's then a Bahamasair onward flight to Eleuthera Island followed by a water taxi across. [britishairways.com](#); [bahamasair.com](#)

BROADEN YOUR HORIZON

Ever see 360° holiday photos and videos pop up in your Facebook feed and wonder, How do I make those? With a camera like the Samsung Gear 360. Capturing a moment in 4K is as easy as pressing a button and holding it up in the air or sticking it on a tripod. For the ultimate in sharing, use it to broadcast live. £175; [samsung.com](#)





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FASHION

ROLE MODEL

Rising star Jack Rowan weighs in with the season's most versatile coats

You might recognise Jack Rowan from Channel 4's chilling drama *Born to Kill*, in which he played a psychotic teenager. Or perhaps it's his latest role as a fighter in the new BBC series of *Peaky Blinders* (20-year-old Rowan is a real-life amateur boxer, so the show's pugilistic action is a convenient fit for him). Here, he takes on three of the season's best outerwear styles from high street stalwarts Topman, which won't bust your budget (or your jaw).

→ Padded

A light, Nineties-style jacket in muted primary tones will look on-trend and just the right side of youthful. Navy/green/red nylon puffer jacket, £65; multicoloured wool jumper, £32; blue denim jeans, £40, all clothes on this page by Topman

← Oversized

A drop-shouldered coat with smart tailoring gives a vampy, cleverly-layered look. Black cotton-faux fur coat, £90; grey plaid double-breasted jacket, £140, burgundy cotton shirt, £30; black cotton trousers, £38; white cotton socks, £3; black leather loafers, £42

→ Shearling

Over contrastingly refined layers — think silk pyjama-style tops — a shearling coat will make you look like anything but a football pundit. Tan shearling jacket, £90; green spotted silk shirt, £32, black cotton trousers, £35

ESQUIRE RECOMMENDS

Tortoiseshell acetate rake comb, £52, by [Buly 1803](#); [mrporter.com](#)

Photographer's assistant: Wil Barker | Grooming: Simon Maynard

Photographs by DAVE ALEXANDER



Jack Rowan:

MY STYLE

Your favourite places to shop?

Second-hand shops like Rokit, but I also like Urban Outfitters, Fred Perry and Farah.

What items catch your eye?

I buy scruffy kinds of jumpers or coats. If I wanted a raincoat I'd want it worn-in. I like the messy look.

Best thing you've bought recently?

I found an amazing Brooks Brothers coat. It's warm, you can wear it with anything, and was only £20.

Who are your style heroes?

I liked the way Oasis dressed, the way Liam Gallagher dressed in the Nineties... he'd wear what I wear now.

Is there anything you like to collect?

Yes, socks, purely because I always wear cropped trousers. My socks are always on show so I wear types that look good with the outfit I wear.

Favoured footwear?

Doc Martens' tassel loafers. I've been through three pairs.

Any style regrets?

I wish I could wear a tracksuit. I don't look good in a tracksuit.

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TRIMATIC

Trimatic symbolizes three Seiko inventions that ensure the highest levels of reliability and durability in its mechanical watches.



Diashock

A shock resistant system that was developed by Seiko in 1958, to preserve precision when the movement is subject to impact. It protects the balance wheel, the component most likely to be damaged from shock and vibration. Even compared to other movement parts, the balance staff is extremely thin, being only between 0.07 to 0.08 mm in diameter, or about the same as a human hair.



Magic Lever

In 1959, Seiko invented the Magic Lever spring winding mechanism, which greatly increases the winding efficiency of a watch and shortens the time needed for the main spring to become fully wound.

This ingenious V-shaped lever allows all the energy generated by the oscillating weight's motion, whether clockwise or anti-clockwise, to be transferred to the mainspring. It is effective, simple and durable and contributes significantly to the longevity of the watch.



Spron

In 1964, Seiko started producing balance springs in-house, utilizing its own specially developed alloy, Spron.

Utilized in all our mechanical watches, Spron mainspring and hair spring alloys are exclusive to Seiko watches. Spron features superior elasticity, strength, and corrosion and heat resistance.

A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and light-colored trousers, is lying down in a private suite on an Emirates A380. She is looking towards a large window on the left, which shows a view of the sky. The suite is furnished with a large bed, a wooden side table, and a tray with various bottles and glasses. The lighting is warm and ambient.

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Emirates



Snow patrol: a WWII B-24 Liberator bomber crew target the cold, Labrador, Canada, 1942

FASHION



THE STYLE COLUMN
by Jeremy Langmead

Frozen assets

Statement coats, bold boots and outdoor accessories — designer winter wear is hotting up, but proceed with caution

Since I am writing this column a few weeks before you read it, I have no idea what sort of weather you're facing today. It could be late autumnal sunshine, sheets of rain or — least likely of all — blankets of white snow.

I'm going to imagine it's the latter. After all, this is the December issue — where, in the magazine world, we all pretend to be in a festive mood — and if you take a peep at what's in the stores this month, the menswear designers seem convinced it's going to be a big freeze. There are rows and rows of big, down-filled puffer coats, shearling coats with fluffy collars high enough to hide the wearer's surprised

expression, cardigans so wide and long they look more like wizards' capes, and dazzling assortments of striped scarves, leather gloves and rubber and suede duck boots.

A friend of mine grew up in the depths of Canada where the winters were cruel and time spent outside in the biting cold was kept to a minimum. It was so cold, she says, that the school run was a complex operation. Not only did she have to wrap up like an Inuit, but her dad's car took a long time to start and was too risky to let stop again on the journey. Instead, as he drew up outside her school, her dad would slow down the car and



Navy nylon down jacket with shearling collar, £3,290, by Brunello Cucinelli


she would be expected to open the passenger door on the move and jump out. "Tuck and roll!" her dad would shout, "Tuck and roll!" — as she landed "splat!" in the snow each morning.

But will it get cold enough to make us buy all these winter clothes and accessories? I love a good statement coat (sorry, I know that sounds wanky), but all the other bits and bobs that go with winter outerwear are fiddly, easy to lose (umbrellas) and either age you (leather gloves) or make you look like a tosser (fedoras).

On the first conundrum — the cold, or lack of — a handful of designers have realised we want to look wintry, whatever the weather, and have come up with coats that look heavy but are deceptively light. The Italian label Eidos is a mix of Neopolitan tailoring and British quirkiness and has designed a checked coat made from a mix of camel hair and linen: it looks snug but is actually lightweight. Another, Brunello Cucinelli, has created a down

shell-jacket that feels as if you're popping on a silk shirt but is rain- and snow-repellent. It has a shearling collar (tick for current trend) but it is detachable if too warm (tick for conundrum sorted).

As for accessories, well, personally I feel we already have enough to carry without having to remember clothing clobber, too. Without wishing to bring back the onesie, the more functions that one item of clothing can cover the better. There is nothing more depressing than losing something that also cost a fortune. It almost — almost, I stress — helps you realise why your mum used to make you wear those knitted gloves tied together with a piece of string threaded through your coat sleeves.

And remember that it is equally important to avoid looking like lamb dressed as mutton as it is mutton dressed as lamb. Swagger to work dressed in a three-quarter length, double-breasted coat, swinging a tall umbrella clasped in leather gloves while wearing a fedora, and you'll resemble the Artful Dodger. If you think I've made dressing for winter sound stressful, I've only one thing to say: "Tuck and roll! Tuck and roll!" 

FOOD

Star quality

L'Enclume mastermind opens bijoux experience in capital

Chef Simon Rogan turned the Cumbrian village Cartmel into a culinary destination with his two Michelin-starred restaurant L'Enclume. Now Rogan returns to London with two new openings. Tucked into a Soho backstreet, Aulis has just eight covers and is only open at night for a sneak peek at dishes still in evolution. The

results go into Roganic, in Marylebone, a former pop-up that gained cultish status back in 2011 and returns as a restaurant. Think of it as a raw L'Enclume for city folk and expect dishes such as mackerel, radish, watercress and apple; hay baked celeriac and whey; and scallops with gooseberry. simonrogan.co.uk



Rogan's run: cosy dining at star chef's new opening Aulis



Mate 10 Porsche Design smartphone, £1,240, by Huawei; huawei.com



TECH

GAME OF PHONES

Let the battle of the luxury smartphones commence

With Apple and Samsung controlling more than 75 per cent of the UK's smartphone market, it's sometimes easy to forget other brands even exist, let alone take a second look at their offering. But anyone dithering over dropping £1,000 on the iPhone X this Christmas might want to do just that. Apple's 10th anniversary product is stunning, but so are three high-end smartphones just unveiled by Huawei, the Chinese company giving the Californians a run for their (not Inconsiderable) money:

the Huawei Mate 10, Huawei Mate 10 Pro and Porsche Design Huawei Mate 10. All have Android Oreo, are powered by a chip dubbed the "AI processor" (designed for "AI-related tasks") and feature dual-camera set-ups by Leica. As you'd expect, the flagship Porsche Design model is the daddy, packing 3D curved glass and an almost-borderless display into an exclusive diamond finish. It's arguably the smartest smartphone on the market, and certainly a beautifully designed object in its own right.

FASHION

Take a load off

Light but tough boots to take the slog out of winter

Sturdy Goodyear welted leather boots are all well and good for the cold but if they weigh you down, that's a problem. Which is why Timberland has created the Radford, a super-lightweight version of its classic six-inch boot. This new style features "active cushioning" and "dynamic flex" on the sole, which adapts to any terrain, and the waterproof leather keeps out all the elements. If Timbers ain't your thing, Grenson has also lightened the load with its Brady hikers, while Tod's offers a high ankle boot in sheepskin-lined black leather that is sublimely wearable.



Dark brown waterbuck Radford boots, £160, by [Timberland](#)



Olive leather ankle boots, £550, by [Tod's](#)



Black leather-suede Brady boots, £240, by [Grenson](#)

Photograph by DAVID LINETON

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THE FITNESS FORECAST
by Harry Jameson, Esquire's personal trainer

IT'S ALL DOWNHILL FROM HERE

Fail to prepare, prepare to bail — how to make your next ski trip the best ever

Unless you're exceptionally organised, ski trips have a habit of sneaking up on you. Suddenly, it's the night before departure, you can't find your goggles and that revealing rip in your salopettes remains unpatched since you toppled off that après table in Les Deux Alpes last winter. But this season will be different, because we've got the workout, the kit and the inspiration you need to get the absolute most out of a holiday in the mountains.

THE KIT

FUSE BRIGANDINE SKI JACKET, BY THE NORTH FACE

The most technically-advanced jacket this brand has ever made (Nasa was consulted during R&D), the Brigandine marks the first ever combination of its FuseForm fabric with a Gore-Tex membrane. It's cut to allow for unimpeded movement, and is loaded with water-tight stash pockets for lift passes, spare goggles and that hip flask of brandy. £700; thenorthface.co.uk



ENFORCER 100 SKIS, BY NORDICA

Sleek enough to carve up the runs and substantial enough to handle the deepest off-piste powder, these skis will deliver the most out of every inch of the mountain. The metal construction (with a solid wood core) means they're lightweight and allows for excellent vibration dampening, while the squared-tail makes turning a doddle. £550; ellis-brigham.com



THE ADVICE

From: Léo Slemett, Freeride World Tour ski champion

What fitness regime do you follow pre-season?

"I'm doing sport whenever I can. Whether it's running or time training, I try and maintain my fitness at a constant level. I prefer to be outside if possible but as soon as the season starts my training is skiing!"

Could you talk us through your nutrition plan?

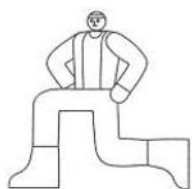
"Does eating French cheese count as a nutritional programme? I'm not massively strict on my diet. As long as I balance diet with exercise I'm confident enough in my condition and technique to be able to perform on the mountain."

Best place in the world to ski?

"The Alps, for sure. There is so much variety for skiing there and the Alps are home for me. This is where I grew up skiing so I will always have an affinity with those mountains! I'm lucky enough to travel and explore the world but I always have to come back."

THE LEG WORKOUT

A five-move circuit to build serious strength and endurance. Perform each of the following exercises non-stop for 90secs, in sequence. Aim for five sets with 90secs rest in-between.



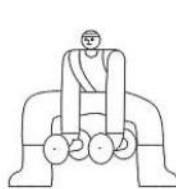
Round-the-clock lunges

Lunge with the left leg to every point on an imaginary clock, then back the other way with the right.



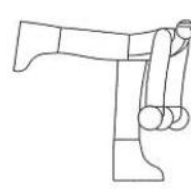
Jumping squats into jumping split-squats

One jumping squat followed by one jumping squat-lunge on each leg.



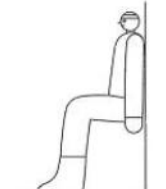
Weighted sumo squat

Assume a sumo stance and hold a dumb-bell in each hand, letting them hang between your legs and perform full-range squats.



Single leg deadlift with dumb-bell

Standing on one leg, perform the deadlift with a dumb-bell in each hand. After 45secs, use other leg.



Static wall squat

Lean in a seated position with your back flat against a wall with a 90° bend in your knees. Try and hold this for the full 90secs.

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*with AdaptiveClean brush head, in vivo testing, 129 participants, Data on file, 2014.
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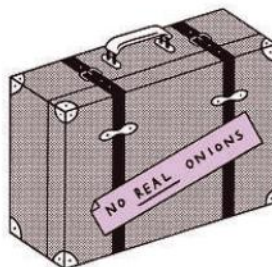
TRAVEL: THE FAST TRACK

William Gilchrist

A lifetime's travel tips from The Rolling Stones' stylist, lover of all things nautical and champion of Cuban sushi



If I were to be stranded it would be on a Mediterranean island — not sure which one — and I'd read the complete works of Gabriel García Márquez. Or perhaps *The People of Paper* by Salvador Plascencia.



One of the great things about being tall is that you get put in the co-pilot's seat on small planes, which means you can smoke out the window, and they'll give you control of the plane. Once, in Tanzania, we were flying along and I asked, "What's that over there?" So the pilot told me to take control and have a look. I flew us around the island a couple of times, and even landed the plane.



My favourite hotel is the George V in Paris. I've got some bloody good memories from there.

There's a sashimi restaurant in a run-down marina on the edge of Havana called Santy. You just order whatever they have. It's beautiful.

If a risotto takes less than 20 minutes, it's not a risotto.

When I pack, I "do the onion" and make sure I have layers. I always chuck in a bunch of scarves, and I have very lightweight cashmere and silk jackets that can go over a regular jacket. And then a suit, which isn't a suit: it's a pair of trousers and a jacket. People think they are inseparable, but that would be a boiler suit.

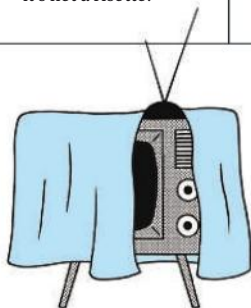
My parents were in Mauritius [when I was growing up], so I'd visit, and that got me the taste for ocean life. But the funny thing was, when you travel a lot as a kid you reach a point, probably in your early teens, when you say, "I'm sick of travelling, I don't want to go to the Seychelles." And now I think, what a precocious idiot.



If Paris and Mumbai were to have a love child, they would spawn Naples. The decadence, the beauty, the pile on pile of history: it doesn't get much better than that.



There's nothing like waking up on a boat in the Mediterranean, getting up, having an espresso and jumping off the boat.



There are certain things I'll always have with me. A wireless speaker, a room fragrance — Fico d'India by Ortigia — and kikoys, the Kenyan scarves. They work as a towel, a mop-your-brow, as a bag. And one goes straight over the TV in the hotel room. I can't stand TVs, they're incredibly ugly.



I've had turbulence where a chap didn't have his seatbelt on and knocked himself out on the ceiling, and I've had an engine fire as we were landing. But nothing too significant. I'm a believer that if there's nothing you can do, do nothing.



ACCESSORIES

EYES FRONT

A new store offers a clear vision for Londoners

Good eyewear is everything, and if you live in London you'll be glad to hear the spectacle scene is 20:20. A new Oliver Peoples opened in Knightsbridge a few months back, and the first Finlay & Co store will open in Soho at the end of November. But it's the new Cubitts on Jermyn Street that's perhaps most exciting.

Different to its four other stores, this atelier will focus on the premium collections, and offer a bespoke service, which features from-scratch bins handmade to order in Kings Cross. 68 Jermyn Street, SW1Y; cubitts.co.uk

— Tortoiseshell acetate frames, £125, by Cubitts

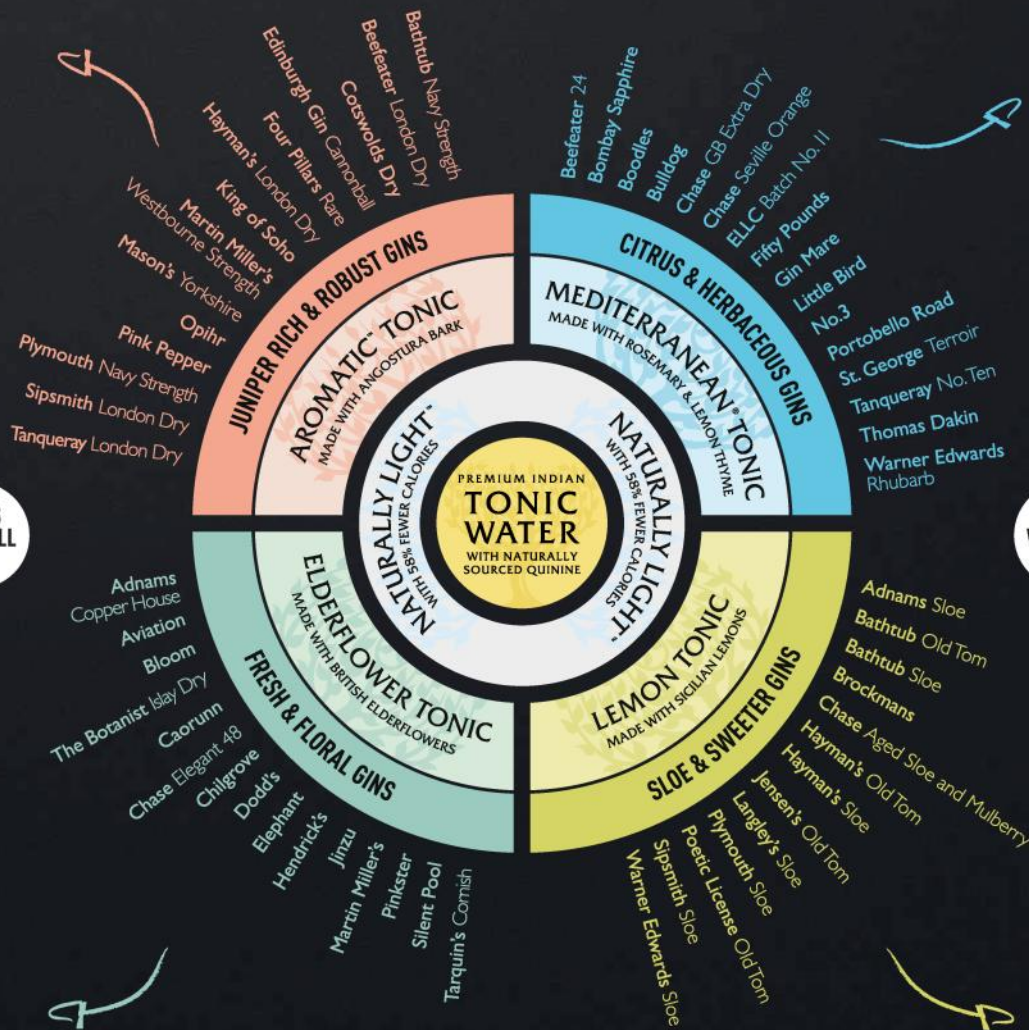


THE ULTIMATE GIN & TONIC PAIRING GUIDE



PAIRS WITH ALL GINS

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Grooming

Face wash: I'm a water-on-the-face guy.

Fragrance: Y by YSL, it's light and floral and feels fresh.

Razor: I trim my beard when people tell me it's a problem.

Shampoo: I wash with conditioner once a month.

Grooming tip: A five-minute, freezing shower each day.

Travel

Hometown: NYC born and raised, but my mother is Italian so we have an old family place in Piacenze.

Hotel: Sunset Tower, Los Angeles; it has old Hollywood charm.

Dream Destination: Tokyo. I've never been to Japan.

Beach: Talamone, Tuscany.

City: I love New York, but I spend more time in LA.

Packing essential: A fresh pair of white Nikes.



THE LIST

David A Flinn

The New York artist and photographer covets old school trainers, Saint Laurent, Tokyo, after-hours pizza and big-feet 4x4s



Tools

Watch: Two-tone Rolex GMT-Master.

Pen: Yellow and black Staedtler.

Gadget: Pocket knife.

Website: nytimes.com.

Instagram account: David Flinn.

Car: Mercedes-Benz G Wagon with 30in tyres.

Motorcycles: Suzuki track bike; Buell XB9SX.



Food and Drink

Dish: Pasta alle vongole.

Spirit: The few times I drink it will be tequila with lemon and ginger beer.

Restaurant: Regina's Grocery, New York. Get the Grandma Lucy tuna sandwich.

Indulgence: Flax4Life mini muffins.

Club: Scarr's Pizza, New York, after hours.

Style

Suit: Saint Laurent.

Shoes: Vintage cowboy boots.

Jeans: 3x1.

Shirts: Denim by Wrangler.

Trainers: Nike Air Max 97.

Tuxedo: Saint Laurent.

Overcoat: Big and woollen.

Hat: Stetson.

Sunglasses: Old Ray-Ban aviators.

Wallet: Comme des Garçons.

Culture

Book: *Black Flags: the Rise of Isis* by Joby Warrick. Good for people to understand how the world got to where it is.

Film: *Deep Red* (1975) by Dario Argento.

Album: *The Best of Aretha Franklin*.

Director: Stanley Kubrick.

Artist: Banks Violette.

FASHION

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE

The animal kingdom is stalking men's fashion this season

The animal trend has been a thing for a good few seasons: subtle at first, but now big and bright and everywhere. Give even the most cursory of glances down Bond Street this winter and you'll see birds of paradise on knitwear, fish on dinner jackets, monkeys on scarves and even the odd dinosaur. Keeping with the theme is

Dolce & Gabbana, who will partner with Harrods this Christmas on a series of festive window displays, pop-up stores-within-store and even a traditional Italian street market. To mark the collaboration, a collection of wildlife-themed accessories has been presented to coincide, of which, our pick is this rather natty wallet.



Black leather with painted leopard wallet, £225, by Dolce & Gabbana x Harrods

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A COFFEE-HEAD

These days, there are as many ways to take your coffee as there are types of coffee. **Taylors of Harrogate's** carefully crafted blends are expertly sourced from the world's best growing regions to bring you the perfect cup, bursting with flavour, whatever the setting or occasion. (Though you might want to try this lot over a week rather than a single day...)

01



MORNING: AMERICANO 'TO GO'

Whether you bounce out of bed every morning ready to embrace the day or stay under the covers squeezing out every last hit on the snooze button, transporting yourself from bed to office is all about maximising the time available to you. A seamless morning routine sets you up for the day ahead, so it's important to get it right. That includes (some might argue relies upon) getting that first coffee of the day right. Hot Lava Java espresso capsules from Taylors of Harrogate are rich, smoky and super-strong. The perfect base for an Americano that will take you from front door to office in style.

RECIPE It's as easy as loading a coffee capsule into a machine and pressing 'go'. Add freshly-boiled water for a longer drink (good if you're taking it with you) and milk to taste. Done!



02

MID-MORNING: POUR-OVER COFFEE

Hard morning pounding the keyboard? While we all know the value of taking regular screen breaks in theory, in practice it's less easily done. One way is to make a proper break of it — think of it as the modern man's elevenses. Pour-over coffee is Filter 2.0: just as easy to prepare but with a suitably stylish twist. Taylors' Scandi-style Fika ground coffee, with its mellow toffee and hazelnut flavour notes, is ideal for a mid-morning brew.

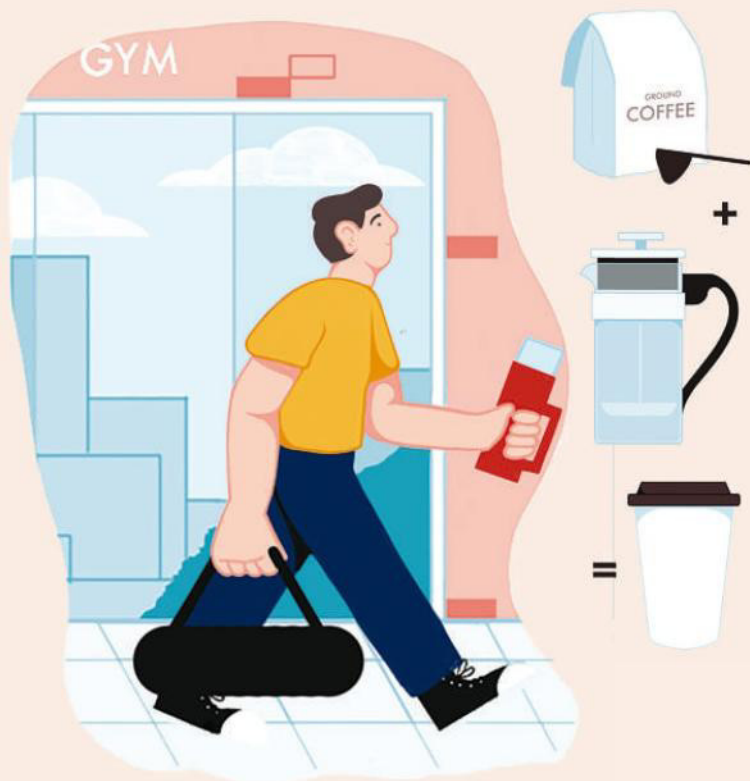
RECIPE A simple, Chemex-style coffee maker takes filter coffee to the next level (in style and taste). Simply add ground coffee to the filter, pour over freshly-boiled water and wait.



03

AFTERNOON PICK-ME-UP: FLAT WHITE





04 PRE-WORKOUT: HIGH-CAFFEINE COFFEE

It is widely accepted (and scientifically proven) that caffeine can bring a performance-enhancing boost to your workout. That's right: caffeine. So forget fussing around with those faddy recipes that involve blending hard-to-pronounce fats and reach for Taylors High Voltage an hour before you start. The strongest ground coffee roast on UK supermarket shelves, its ultra-dark roast and formidable flavours will bring depth as well as kick to your cup — and your workout.

RECIPE Add ground coffee and hot water to a cafetiere (give it a good stir with a spoon before you seal with the plunger, letting it brew for 4-5 minutes helps extract maximum flavour from the blend). Sometimes it pays to keep it simple.

It's post-lunch, with plenty of hours in the day still ahead. What's needed is a lift that will get you over the afternoon slump without peaking too soon. The answer? That excellent Antipodean import, the flat white. Lively and uplifting, Taylors' Degraives ground coffee offers convenience with the depth of flavour (dark chocolate, caramel) you need. Add a little hot, lightly foamed milk (easily done at work; see recipe) and take it outside. A brisk walk will clear your head, setting you up for a productive afternoon ahead.



RECIPE Prepare coffee by your preferred method. Heat a little milk in the office microwave and create a light foam with an electric frother (a vigorous shake in a sealed jar works too) and voilà! A near-pro flat white to go.

05 DESSERT: AFFOGATO

Be it a romantic dinner for two, supper with friends or a why-the-hell-not solo treat, mid-week desserts should be as easy to prepare as they are tasty to eat. Enter that great Italian classic, affogato. The ingredients are the star here, so take the time to grind and prepare your

espresso from scratch — Taylors Rich Italian coffee beans will do you nicely.

RECIPE Grind enough beans for a double espresso each (machine or moka pot). Place a scoop of quality vanilla ice cream in a small bowl. Pour over hot espresso and eat immediately. (It's that simple. Really.)



A TASTE OF TAYLORS OF HARROGATE

Great coffee is about flavour. For Taylors of Harrogate, this all starts with the bean. Its expert team has decades of experience seeking out the finest from the world's best growing regions. Those beans are then slow-roasted just so, before being crafted into perfectly balanced blends that are bursting with extraordinary flavour. But it's not just about the finished product for Taylors. All its coffee comes from independently certified farms and co-operatives, and the brand works hard to build long-lasting relationships that nourish and support local communities and help them grow.

Discover the range and find out more at taylorsofharrogate.co.uk



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HEALTH



THE MACKLIN REGIME by Tom Macklin

Powder to the people

Mastering protein intake can be troublesome but here's how to get ahead of the gains

Shakes, bars, pills, meats, it seems every man and his PT are increasing protein intake. But how can you be sure you're getting the basics right? Nutritionist Sarah Ann Macklin gives an overview.

Plant or whey protein?

"Rice protein can be as effective as whey protein in building muscle, gaining strength and aiding recovery. Whey contains lactose, which means it can be harder to digest and results in bloating. Plant protein combinations (such as pea, hemp and rice) can offer a rich supply of amino acids and an effective alternative to whey."

What exactly is protein?

"It's one of three essential macronutrients which cells in our bodies need to function and repair themselves, as well as support the immune system. It consists of 20 amino acids, nine of which we need to obtain from our diet as the human body cannot synthesize them."

How can protein benefit training?

"It aids muscle growth depending on the adequacy of the proteins. A supplement with leucine is best, as the amino acid plays a key role in stimulating muscle protein synthesis."

When do I take it?

"For maximum benefit, consume within an hour of exercising to enhance muscle protein synthesis and growth in the body."

Best protein source?

"Dairy, eggs and lean meat contain the nine essential amino acids. Supplements can offer a practical alternative but may contain excess sugar in sweeteners and flavourings."

Is too much protein bad?

"Excessive amounts can risk displacing essential carbohydrate intake, which gives energy during training. Too much protein intake has also been linked to an increased pressure on the kidneys."

How much should I consume?

"An average gym-fit man who wants to build muscle should increase protein intake up to 1.8-2.2g per kilo of body weight a day, depending on lean body mass and type of exercise."

Pro moves: three to consider



Perform: Raw Cacao, £40/910g, by Vivo Life; vivolife.co.uk



Plant Protein + Gut Food, £50/200g, by The Nue Co; thenueandco.com



Sport Elixir, £40/30 servings, by Alchemy; alchemysuperblends.com

And failing that...

A 100g rib eye steak will give you 24g of pure protein, so get grilling, boyo





FASHION

Put on a brave front

Seven of the season's strongest statement jumpers, for when a navy crew neck simply won't cut it

Star in stripes:
a relaxed Mick
Jagger, 1964



1. Burberry
Green/blue mouliné
patchwork wool,
£995

2. Prada
Multicoloured
angora wool with
book print detail,
£765

**3. Pringle of
Scotland**
Brown/white/black
wool, £1,595

**4. Stella
McCartney**
Brown/blue/green
plaid wool, £690

5. Calvin Klein
205W39NYC
Black/yellow/beige
wool, £650

6. APC
Brown/cream
jacquard knit
wool, £270

**7. Richard
James**
Multicoloured
wool, £625

**Jack
Wolfskin**

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STORMLOCK

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jack-wolfskin.com



THE STYLE CLINIC with Catherine Hayward

According to your esteemed magazine last month (and the month before), corduroy is *the* fabric for the sharp-dressed man. I'm delighted, obviously, as a 44-year-old man who values comfort, warmth and practicality, but won't I look like a geography teacher, or a fat Jarvis Cocker, or that funny film director? And even if I were to buy a corduroy suit, what would I wear with it? Yours in anticipation, Frank, Hastings

May I be frank, Frank? Unless you happen to be Wes Anderson, *The Fantastic Mr Fox* or, indeed, a geography teacher, dressing head-to-foot in corduroy (or any trend, for that matter) is not something I would necessarily advocate. Let me explain. In *All the President's Men* (1976), Robert Redford spends much of his time wearing a wide-lapelled, tan corduroy suit. He looks bookish, debonair and handsome (as much to do with the fact he's good looking, as the outfit he's wearing).

The look was imitated, in part, on the Prada runway this season (there was a dash of Wes Anderson nerdiness about the curry-hued, boot-cut cord trousers on show, too) and the models looked elegant and cool.

The sad reality is though, Frank, that not all men are blessed with the looks of Robert Redford or, indeed, the coat-hanger proportions of Prada's models, and as a consequence, some trends (corduroy included)

are better drip-fed into your wardrobe one piece at a time. With that in mind, why not try teaming one of Prada's natty cord coats with a pair of tapered navy chinos and chocolate brown desert boots?

For an even smarter look, a Ralph Lauren or Brunello Cucinelli slim-cut, chocolate brown cord blazer worn with indigo jeans, a button-down shirt and old school white trainers looks both low-key and dashing. If you do plan on going full suit, you could do worse than J Crew's dependable Ludlow cord two-piece in forest green, a hue which makes the ensemble look a little less geography teacher and a little more elegantly crumpled Ivy League freshman.

For fairly priced corduroy basics, new brand Cords & Co is worth seeking out. Founded last year in Stockholm and launched in London's Soho this autumn, the brand specialises — you guessed it — in premium corduroy; trousers from £125, jackets from £180.

Strike a cord (from left): green cotton-corduroy suit jacket, £425; green cotton-corduroy suit trousers, £225, both by J Crew. Brown corduroy coat, £2,170, by Prada. Dark grey Sea Island cotton-corduroy suit (under gilet), £3,250, by Brunello Cucinelli



BOOKS

STYLE WITH A SPINE

Five fashionable books for the smart and sophisticated



1. CALVIN KLEIN by Calvin Klein
(Rizzoli, £100)

2. LONDON UPRISING: FIFTY FASHION DESIGNERS, ONE CITY by Tania Fares and Sarah Mower (Phaidon, £70)

3. PETER LINDBERGH: A DIFFERENT VISION ON FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY by Thierry-Maxime Loriot (Taschen, £50)

4. VINTAGE MENSWEAR by Josh Sims, Douglas Gunn and Roy Luckett (Laurence King, £15)

5. APC TRANSMISSION
(Phaidon, £75)

FASHION

History in briefs

Are you a Churchill, a Cousteau, a Hemingway — or a Wallace? Find out with Esquire's only slightly sketchy Icons in Their Underwear wallchart



Boxer briefs

Neil Armstrong

The original Captain America, Armstrong needed reliable kecks; something that wouldn't ride up during the launch sequence or perish 240,000 miles above Earth. Sleek and understated, but with the capacity to impress the lunar babes, were they to materialise. A bit like Armstrong himself.

Today he'd wear: The Sea Island pant, £102, by Zimmerli. Classic and hardwearing in ultra-luxurious Sea Island cotton.



Briefs

Jacques Cousteau

Alongside red beanies and silver wetsuits, classic budgie smugglers were standard issue uniform aboard Cousteau's research vessel *Calypso*. The French oceanographer would often stalk its decks — Gauloise on the go — in just his pants, surveying the horizon, ready to scuba-tank-up at a moment's notice.

Today he'd wear: Cotton Karl Heinz briefs, (three pack) £70, by Schiesser. Fitted and sleek, ideal for skinny jeans and sportswear.



Silk boxers

Sir Winston Churchill

After a hard day battling the Nazis, Winnie would retire to Number 10, slip out of his Turnbull & Asser one-piece "siren suit" and into a bath. An hour later and towel-dried, he'd reach for the silky bloomers and a Romeo y Julieta before sitting by the fire and dozing off.

Today he'd wear: Silk-satin Brindisi print boxer shorts, £150, by Derek Rose. Super lightweight and soft on your body's CBD, but perhaps best reserved for those bigger occasions.



Y-fronts

Ernest Hemingway

"There are some things which cannot be learned quickly, and time, which is all we have, must be paid heavily for their acquiring." We don't know for sure he was talking about underpants in *Death in the Afternoon* from 1932, but Y-fronts are especially good for bullfighting, so he probably was.

Today he'd wear: Lyocell-elastane Y-Briefs, £27, by CDLP. Complete with a macho "enhanced pouch" and even odour-resistance.



Boxer shorts

Muhammad Ali

Pretty self-explanatory but The Greatest was a real stickler for loose underwear. In fact, Ali was so in thrall to its comfort that he would layer up, often wearing six or seven pairs beneath his boxing shorts: perhaps the true secret of his power.

Today he'd wear: Pure twill cotton boxer shorts, £35, by Hamilton & Hare. English tailored boxers which have to pass a facial-skin softness "cheek test" before being allowed on sale.

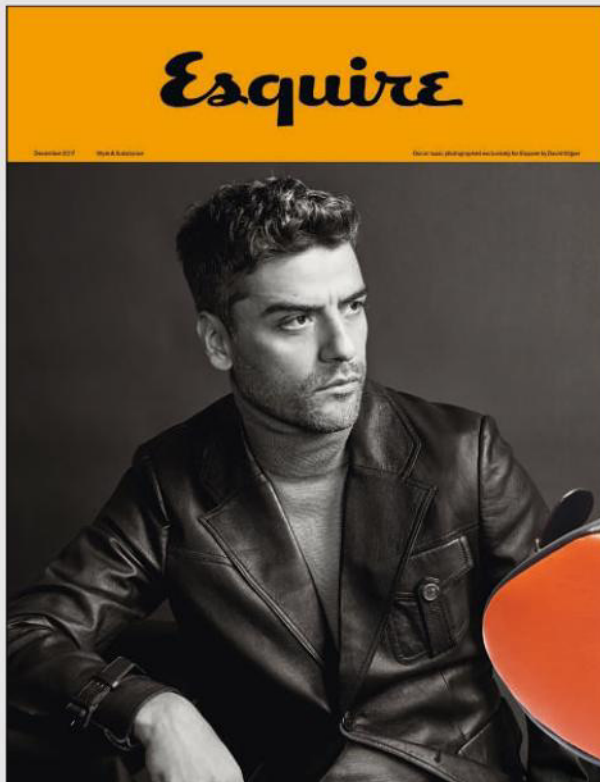


Commando

William Wallace

As the great aggravator might once have said, "They may take our lives, but they will never take our freedom (to not wear pants!)" He had a point: nothing's going to spur you on in battle like the whip of a Highland gale about your knackers.

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The Original Rugby leather washbag from Osprey London, worth £55

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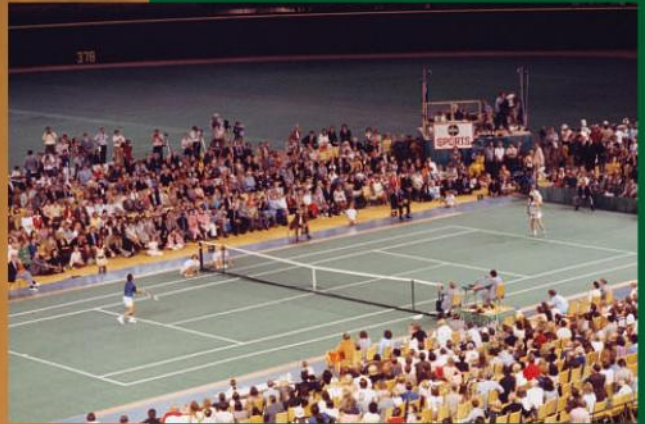
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Culture



Wrestle mania: Emma Stone and Steve Carell, left, play out the 1973 Riggs versus King match, below, in *Battle of the Sexes*



Are we being served?

Battle of the Sexes re-enacts a famous moment in the fight for gender equality. Does it go far enough?

If you had to name the most likeable actors in Hollywood, Emma Stone and Steve Carell would surely be the top seeds. And if you wanted to make a film about the 1973 tennis match between superstar Billie Jean King and faded ex-pro Bobby Riggs that portrayed both players as, well, likeable, you'd want those two on board. Which is what *Little Miss Sunshine* directors Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris seem to have gone for with their new movie, *Battle of the Sexes*, and with the expected results. A likeable film starring likeable people about some other likeable people. Little blue thumbs-ups all round.

But the subject is a serious one. In 1972, Billie Jean King had just triumphed at the US Open, when word

→

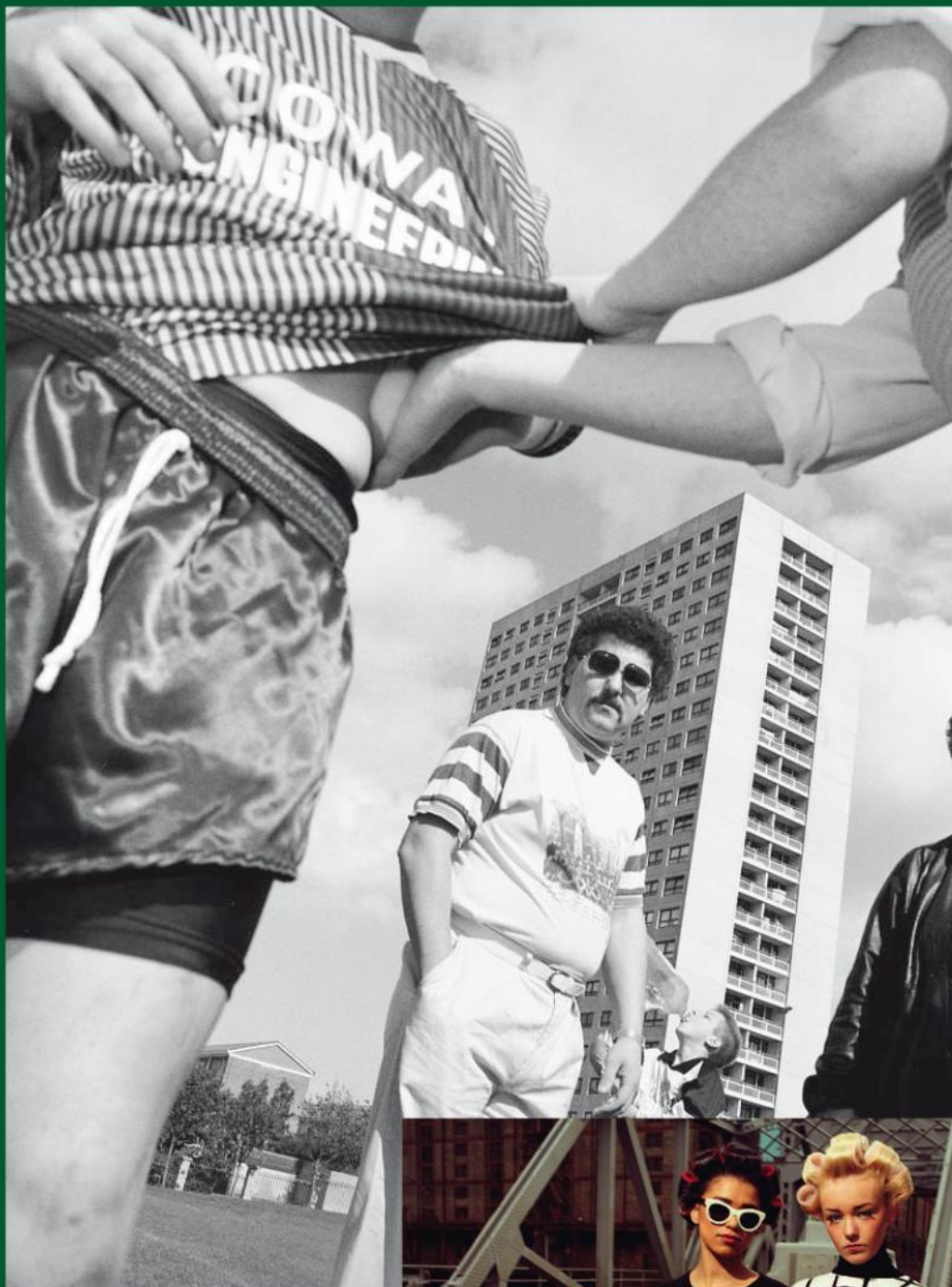


got out of a new tournament offering the men's champion eight times more than the winner of the women's competition. Her protest got her kicked out of the United States Tennis Association. (Progress stayed slow: male and female Wimbledon winners didn't win equal cash prizes until 2007.) It also sparked a brainwave in master self-publicist Riggs: the match that became the most watched sports event on TV at the time.

Battle of the Sexes plots the build-up to the game, alongside King's growing awareness of her own sexuality — she was married but became involved with her hairdresser (played by Andrea Riseborough) — and Riggs' own private concerns: a gambling habit and a desire to blow some hot air into his deflating career. When Riggs cavorts about in a “chauvinist” T-shirt, he does so with cartoonish lack of sincerity, happy to play the panto villain for another round in the limelight.

The problem is knowing just who's in on the joke. Are the male fans wearing “chauvinist” T-shirts also being ironic? Or can playing the comedy misogynist simply empower many more uncomedic misogynists to come out of the woodwork? The film lets Riggs off the hook on this one, and maybe the audience too, so we can leave with hearts a little fuller than they were, and heads a little emptier than they perhaps should be.

—
Battle of the Sexes is out in cinemas on 24 November



Northern exposures

A show celebrating the unique styles of Up There heads Down Here



Hit the north (clockwise from left): from Ken Grant's *A Topical Times* for *These Times*, 'Liverpool, 2016'; 'Untitled' by Jason Evans, Manchester, 1997; 'The Liver Birds' fashion shoot for *Love* by Alice Hawkins, Liverpool, 2012



Earlier this year, *North: Fashioning Identity*, an exhibition which has just opened at Somerset House in London, showed at Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool. Will it play differently in the capital? Instead of being a paean to home-grown creativity and innovation in art, photography and fashion, will it become an exercise in exoticism ("Look Jemima, a shell-suit!")?

The show features more than 100 photographs, artworks and togs from a roll-call of talent including photographers Corinne Day and Nick Knight, fashion designer Sir Paul Smith and Factory Records graphic designer Peter Saville, plus a new film by photographer Alasdair McLellan. Worth slipping into something more comfortable — with a soupçon of polyester perhaps — and heading on down.

—
North: *Fashioning Identity* is on now until 4 February 2018, Somerset House, London WC2; somersethouse.org.uk

Playing a blinder

He may not have scored that goal against Sweden, but London actor Joe Cole is making a name for himself in *Peaky Blinders* and now, *Black Mirror*

Actors. A bit soft, right? Not Joe Cole though, when he tells you about shooting *A Prayer Before Dawn*, out next year. Filmed in part in a Thai prison with thousands of real prisoners for extras, it tells the true story of Billy Moore, a British boxer who fought his way through a three-year stay in Bangkok's Klong Prem prison. "I learned Muay Thai boxing," says Cole, 28. "I was sparring for real with prison boxing champions. One of the guys had killed three people. I'd go to sleep and dream that they'd lost the footage and I'd have to do

it all again tomorrow..."

But fist-fighting with murderers in a Thai prison is better than what Cole was doing a few years before. He was in Kingston, Surrey, in a rut. "I felt like the world was against me," he says. "There were points in my teens when I said, 'OK, I need to do this, because right now I'm selling carpets, I'm being cheated on and I'm a mess. I'm not going to be this person.'"

And now he isn't. In addition to *A Prayer Before Dawn*, the new season of *Peaky Blinders* — the period drama in which Cole has played John Shelby

since it first aired back in 2013 — returns to the BBC this month. For those who live off-grid, it's about the Shelby family, gangland anti-heroes operating in the underworld of Birmingham following WWI. It is a certified hit and more seasons are planned, but Cole seems ready for new challenges. "It has been fantastic to grow up and work on a show that is so incredibly popular. It's a joy, man," he continues. "The thing is, I'm just busy."

He's busy on projects such as an episode of *Black Mirror*, though other than saying it's about a dating app that maps out all your relationships, he's tight-lipped.

So far, Cole has had lots of fist-wielding, macho roles (even his cross-dressing Connor in 2014 short film *Slap* was a boxer). But, inspired by actors such as *Blinders* co-star Tom Hardy, he won't be pigeon-holed.

"I think he's bold, which for me is exciting," Cole says of Hardy. "Not playing by the rules and doing the most obvious thing: I find that interesting."

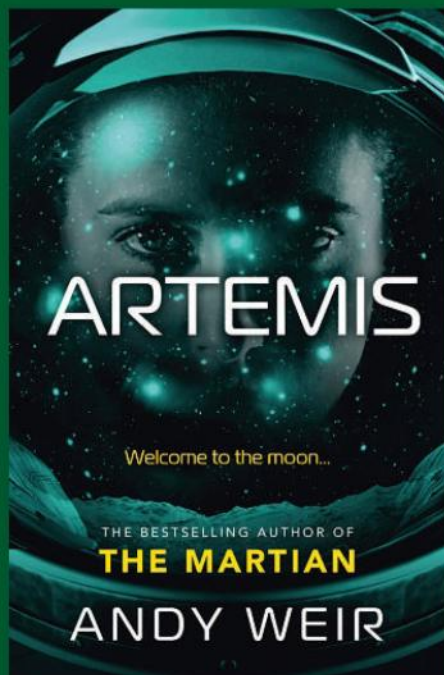
—
Black Mirror: Season 4 launches later this year on Netflix



Sneak peak: Joe Cole alongside Georgina Campbell in *Black Mirror*'s 'Hang the DJ'

Dark side of the moon

In a new sci-fi novel, a lunar utopia is beset by earthly corruption



Andy Weir, a computer programmer from California, had been writing sci-fi for his website for a while when, at the behest of his fans, he self-published a Kindle edition of his book, *The Martian*, about an astronaut who gets stranded on the Red Planet during a bungled evacuation. It proved popular, to say the least, selling 5m copies and becoming an Oscar-nominated movie starring Matt Damon. Not bad for a debut.

It's impossible not to read Weir's follow-up, *Artemis*, without imagining the film version — and yes, there's one in the works. Who could play plucky female lead Jasmine "Jazz" Bashara, a foul-mouthed, hard-drinking, renegade genius

of Saudi origin, working as a porter in the lunar colony of Artemis, a city with light governance and unconventional revenue streams to exploit? (For what it's worth, Rosario Dawson narrates the audiobook.)

And what about Trond Landvik, the Norwegian billionaire who recruits Jazz for a plot to take over the lucrative aluminium industry for a sum that will get her a slice of the lunar high-life (basically, having her own bathroom)? Or Jazz's father, Ammar, a master-welder whose patience with his renegade daughter is wearing thin as his concern for her grows?

Trond's scheme involves Jazz destroying some large rock-collecting machines which, by virtue of her

expertise in welding and sharp scientific mind (she also has a smoking-hot bod) she should be more than able to manage. But great plans etc, and Jazz soon finds out that the flow of money runs through some decidedly muddy channels on Artemis, just like Earth.

Weir's great skill as a writer, as he already proved with *The Martian*, is his attention to detail. *Artemis* might be sci-fi but it is not fantasy, and Weir carefully explains the processes, systems and mechanisms by which humans might survive on a lunar outpost, and also those by which others might take advantage. Air pressure, gravitational pull or lack thereof, the chemical make-up of the rocks and the air, and various things which — if you're planning a high-stakes heist — become very important indeed. (When he serialised *The Martian* online, fans were able to correct factual errors as he went along: it will be interesting to see how that works in a traditional publishing model.)

Yes, some of the characters aren't as fleshed out as they might be — Jazz has a sharp-tongued gay drinking buddy, a nutty-scientist admirer, a burly policeman nemesis and a taciturn ex-Marine boss — and Jazz herself is something of a nerd's wet dream (did we mention she also puts out?), but that doesn't stop *Artemis* being a triumph of imagination.

Nasa has a section of its website dedicated to *The Martian*, and if we do ever colonise the moon, don't be surprised if Weir's vision turns out to be prophetically close to the mark.

—
Artemis by Andy Weir is out now (Ebury)





Headmaster ritual: Morrissey's latest release, *Low in High School*, is his 11th solo album

Thoroughly modern Mozza

Having mastered the art of trolling liberals, Morrissey embraces his next task: kill off the album

Though some fans of The Smiths might wish they'd preserved him in vinegar some time around 1986, the continued career of Morrissey has left us all in a bit of a pickle. What to do with the man, once a wafting firebrand, now a middle-aged contrarian? He's still producing punchy music, but so too is he letting rip with unhinged political ideas (see his recent thoughts on the Ukip leadership elections) that make it hard to know whether he should be humoured or hushed.

Yet perhaps Morrissey was made for these times, when outrageous sentiments can be casually expressed, widely circulated, and almost as quickly forgotten.

And now, with his new album, *Low in High School*, he's exemplifying a new phenomenon in the age of the playlist: the redundancy of the LP.

The first half of the album is actually a bit of a lark. It opens with a howl like a sexually frustrated chimpanzee, ushering "My Love, I'd do Anything for You", which is swaggering and full of majestic trombones. Then there's the hearty electro of "I Wish You Lonely", a call for independent thought free of civic burden, unlike the tombs "*full of fools who gave their lives upon command*". Lead single "Spent the Day in Bed" is another jaunty plea to opt

out of societal norms ("no bus, no boss, no rain, no train") and comes with a video featuring Morrissey being pushed in a wheelchair by another adept commentator of the Twitter era, Joey Barton.

But an album is soooooo long, especially for these flighty millennials. And here Morrissey shows himself to be decidedly 21st century. For the second half, proceed with caution. The muscular ballad "In Your Lap" makes a peculiar analogy between the Arab Spring and oral sex, and then there's the bizarre tango of "When You Open Your Legs" (spot any themes?). By the time you hit gothic wail-a-thon album closer "Israel" you're 100 per cent ready to confine the concept of the full-length album to the dustbin of history and get back to those LOL catz. Job done.

—
Low in High School by Morrissey is out on 17 November (Etienne Records/BMG)

Revisionist views

Three new documentaries to make you look again



3

Remember Cecil the lion? He was the handsome fellow shot by a dentist from Minneapolis, whose death sparked an expose of the "canned hunting" industry, where wealthy tourists fly to Africa to shoot big game that have been especially bred for their bullets. Only when you watch *Trophy* (1), the fascinating new film from Shaul Schwarz and Christina Clusiau (out 17 November) you realise that it isn't so simple, and that the hunting and

conservation industries are knottily entwined. The fact that hunting animals produces profit means breeding programmes can be properly funded: the "if it pays it stays" model. So does the motive matter? Your sympathies may flow in unexpected directions, though watching the last gasps of a young bull elephant, they will go just one way.

Out already this month is *No Stone Unturned* (2) from director Alex Gibney (*Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief*; *Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer*; and *Taxi to the Dark Side*). Like *Trophy*, it takes a supposedly known story, the murder of six innocent men by loyalist gunmen in a pub in County Down in 1994 — and probes

again. Was it simply police incompetence that meant no one was ever charged, or were there higher, and darker, machinations at work? Gibney, a fearless film-maker, eventually dares to do what no official review had: name names.

One name you might possibly know is Cesar Chavez, the Mexican-American activist who helped guarantee basic rights to fruit and vegetable pickers in the early Sixties. But what about his union co-founder Dolores Huerta (3)? Often described as Chavez's right-hand woman or, wrongly, as his girlfriend, this determined mother of 11 — 11! — finally gets recognition for her contribution, and what it cost her, in Peter Bratt's *Dolores* (out 1 December), which should put her name into the history books.



The Disaster Artist: words by Finlay Renwick

Hollywood ending

Somehow, James Franco has directed an excellent film about one of the worst movies ever made

If you told us this time last year that a film both directed by and starring James Franco, with roles for his usually forgettable brother Dave and stoner comedy bud Seth Rogen, would be subject to faint murmurs of Oscars hype, we'd have told you to get outta town! (Or something equally 2016.) But this is 2017, and there's a talking satsuma in the White House, and blah blah, so come the next Academy Awards, you wouldn't rule it out.

The film is *The Disaster Artist*, a meta exploration of the making of 2003's *The Room*, known in certain circles (people who like terrible films) as the *Citizen Kane* of bad movies. *The Room's* cult following also made a midnight-screening icon of its mysterious auteur, Tommy Wiseau, who wrote,

directed and entirely funded it (to the tune of \$6m). This equal-parts bizarre and beguiling character is played to perfection here by James Franco, while his brother Dave plays Greg Sestero, upon whose book the film is based.

Greg is a shy and struggling young actor who, at an improv class, meets Tommy, an impulsive oddball with straggly black hair and a questionable accent. The pair strike up an incongruous friendship and move to LA to make a proper go of acting, while Wiseau dreams up the script for a movie that's absolutely, definitely NOT based on his own life. If they can't get a job, then he'll make one for them. A catastrophe from the start, we see Tommy pour his soul and bank account into his passion project,

while simultaneously proving to be a capricious and clueless director. Meanwhile, Greg realises his ticket to the big time is more of a seat on a rail replacement bus service.

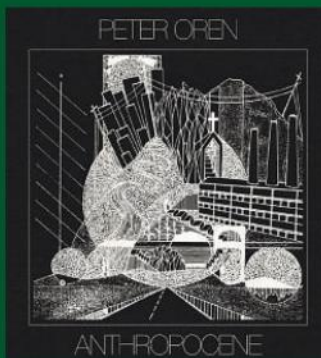
Apparently, the elder Franco spent the entire production in character and it shows. As Wiseau he is at once strange, intriguing, vulnerable and threatening: a revelation when compared to his oft-favoured role as a smarmy slacker. Far from an exercise in mockery, *The Disaster Artist* is a funny, warm and tightly-paced homage to spectacular failure and unlikely triumph; to dreaming big, even if those dreams are a bit rubbish.

— The Disaster Artist is out on 1 December

Down deep

On his stirring album, Peter Oren pairs earthy voice with worldly conscience

Peter Oren's voice sounds like he's lived a long, eventful life which, given he's 25, is statistically difficult, but makes his new album, *Anthropocene*, seem decidedly wise. He shares heavy thoughts, too, such as the shameful history of race relations in his hometown of Columbus, Indiana, which he channels into spare acoustic guitar ditty "Falling Water", while the title track was inspired by watching an oil refinery belch fire into the sky. Scant years, but major talent. *Anthropocene* by Peter Oren is out now (Western Vinyl)



Face book



It says something about the spirit of *The Face* that it has taken 13 years for this book, *The Story of the Face*, to come out. The magazine was always put together for love not money, certainly not *with* money: early issues were glued together on founder Nick Logan's kitchen table. Logan had edited *New Musical Express* and launched *Smash Hits*; he wanted *The Face* to marry the journalistic standards of one to the visual aspect of the other. With *i-D* and *Blitz*, *The Face* begat the style press. Before youth TV, *Loaded* and

Esquire's Johnny Davis (editor of *The Face*, 1999–'02) on a new book celebrating the influential 'Eighties' style bible'



Cover versions (top row): Jerry Dammers, May 1980; David Bowie, November 1980; Northern Soul, September 1982; New Order, July 1983. Middle: Electro, May 1984; British men's style, November 1984. Bottom: Kurt Cobain, September 1993; Damon Albarn, May 1994; Bridget Hall, January 1998; Robbie Williams, January 1999



the internet, it gave a voice to British youth culture. It had Julie Burchill, Gavin Hills and Chris Heath on words, Nick Knight, Jean-Baptiste Mondino and Mario Testino on pictures. Stylist Katie Grand and graphic designer Neville Brody worked there. (Yes, so did I.) In 1990, it ran the first published photos of a 15-year-old Kate Moss.

The Story of The Face has 350-plus pages of spreads and covers from the Logan era, which ended in 2001. Author Paul Gorman makes a good fist of the inside story, too. ("We left when we were asked to do our



second Robbie Williams cover," huffs one creative director. "It was bad enough having to do the first one.")

Often referred to as the "Eighties' style bible", its most successful period was actually the mid-Nineties, when Britpop went mad and an array of *Face*-friendly stars arrived: Tricky, Björk, Damon, Jarvis, Alexander McQueen.

By the Noughties it had become the victim of its own success: every newspaper now carried a style supplement. It finally folded in 2004. Next year, it's due to be relaunched as a website. For now its spirit lives on in fashion bi-annuals *Love and Pop*, launched by *Face* alumni Grand and Ashley Heath, and in any magazine, blog or Instagram post that attempts to freeze-frame pop culture in 2D. This book, too.

—
The Story of The Face: The Magazine that Changed Culture (Thames & Hudson) is out now

In other notable-former-contrib-to-The-Face-news...


Jamie Hewlett, another alumnus of the much-missed monthly, publishes his first monograph

Forget the 13 years it took to do *The Story of The Face*, Jamie Hewlett has taken 25 years to put together his first proper coffee table book. Then again, it's not like he hasn't been busy, what with creating punk-feminist icon Tank Girl; inventing Gorillaz, the world's most successful cartoon band, with Damon Albarn; devising block-busting Chinese opera, *Monkey: Journey to the West* with Albarn again, or creating the idents for the London 2012 Olympics.

Here at last, then, is a visual tour of Hewlett's career (and also, thanks to a chapter of fake-porno posters featuring his wife, Emma de Caunes, his personal life) from "Get the Freebies", his comic strip for *The Face* in the Nineties, to his as-yet unrealised children's book series, including such promising titles as *Alan the Cat Takes Another Nap*. It's not all about the pictures, either — Hewlett's deadpan captions are a delight in themselves.

—
Jamie Hewlett: Works from the Last 25 Years (Taschen) is out in late November





Dark brown leather
jacket, £2,065; camel
cashmere roll-neck, £880;
grey wool trousers,
£525; black leather belt,
£310, all by Prada

High flyer

From an acclaimed Prince of Denmark on stage in New York to Poe Dameron, X-wing pilot and hero of the Resistance in the new Star Wars movies, Oscar Isaac is fast (very, very fast) becoming his generation's most accomplished leading man

Interview by
Miranda Collinge

Photographs by
David Slijper

Fashion by
Allan Kennedy

ON 21 AUGUST 2017, the Great American Eclipse caused a diagonal swathe of darkness to fall across the United States from Charleston, South Carolina on the East Coast to Lincoln City, Oregon on the West. In Manhattan, which was several hundred miles outside the path of totality, a gentle gloom fell over the city. Yet still office workers emptied out onto the pavements, wearing special paper glasses if they had been organised; holding up their phones and blinking nervously if they hadn't. Despite promises that it was to be lit up for the occasion, there was no discernible twinkle from the Empire State Building; on Fifth Avenue, the darkened glass façade of Trump Tower grew a little dimmer. In Central Park Zoo, where children and tourists brandished pinhole cameras made from cereal boxes, Betty, a grizzly bear, seized the opportunity to take an unscrutinised dip.

Across the East River in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Oscar Isaac, a 38-year-old Guatemalan-American actor and one of the profession's most talented, dynamic and versatile recent prospects, was, like Betty, feeling too much in the sun. It was his day off from playing Hamlet in an acclaimed production at the Public Theater in Manhattan and he was at home on vocal rest. He kept a vague eye on the sky from the balcony of the one-bedroom apartment he shares — until their imminent move to a leafier part of Brooklyn — with his wife, the Danish documentary film-maker Elvira Lind, their Boston Terrier French Bulldog-cross Moby (also called a "French-ton", though not by him), and more recently, and to Moby's initial consternation, their four-month-old son, Eugene.

Plus, he's seen this kind of thing before. "I was in Guatemala in 1992 when there was a full solar eclipse," he says the next day, sitting at a table in the restaurant of a fashionably austere hotel near his Williamsburg apartment, dressed in dark T-shirt and jeans and looking — amazingly, given his current theatrical and parental commitments — decidedly fresh. "The animals went crazy; across the whole city you could hear the dogs howling." Isaac happened to be in Central America, he'll mention later, because Hurricane Andrew had ripped the roof off the family home in Miami, Florida, while he and his mother, uncle, siblings and cousins huddled inside under couches and cushions. So yes, within the spectrum of Oscar Isaac's experiences, the Great American Eclipse is no biggie.

Yet there is another upcoming celestial event that will have a reasonably significant impact on Isaac's life. On 15 December, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* will be released in cinemas, which, if you bought a ticket to *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* — and helped it gross more than \$2bn worldwide — you'll know is a pretty big deal. You'll also know that Isaac plays Poe Dameron, a hunky, wise-cracking X-wing fighter pilot for the Resistance who became one of the most popular characters of writer-director JJ Abrams' reboot of the franchise thanks to Isaac's charismatic performance and deadpan delivery (see his "Who talks first?" exchange with Vader-lite baddie Kylo Ren: one of the film's only comedic beats).

And if you did see *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* you'll know that, due to some major father-son conflict, there's now an opening for a loveable, rogueish, leather-jacket-wearing hero... "Heeeeee!" says Isaac, Fonzie-style, when I say as much. "Well, there could be, but I think what [*The Last Jedi* director] Rian [Johnson] did was make it less about filling a slot and more about what the story needs. The fact is now that the Resistance has been whittled to just a handful of people, they're running for their lives, and Leia is grooming me — him — to be a leader of the Resistance, as opposed to a dashing, rogue hero."

While he says he has "not that much more, but a little more to do" in this film, he can at least be assured he survives it; he starts filming *Episode IX* early next year.

If Poe seems like one of the new *Star Wars* firmament now — alongside John Boyega's Finn, Daisy Ridley's Rey and Poe's spherical robot sidekick BB-8 — it's only because Isaac willed it. Abrams had originally planned to kill Poe off, but when he met Isaac to discuss him taking the part, Isaac expressed some reservations. "I said that I wasn't sure because I had already done that role in other movies where you kind of set it up for the main people and then you die spectacularly," he remembers. "What's funny is that [producer] Kathleen Kennedy was in the room and she was like, 'Yeah, you did that for us in *Bourne*!'" (Sure enough, in 2012's *Bourne Legacy*, Jeremy Renner's character, Aaron Cross, steps out of an Alaskan log cabin while Isaac's character, Outcome Agent 3, stays inside; a few seconds later the cabin is obliterated by a missile fired from a passing drone.)

This ability to back himself — judiciously

and, one can imagine after meeting him, with no small amount of steely charm — seems to have served Isaac well so far. It's what also saw him through the casting process for his breakthrough role in Joel and Ethan Coen's 2014 film *Inside Llewyn Davis*, about a struggling folk singer in Sixties New York, partly based on the memoir of nearly-was musician Dave Van Ronk. Isaac, an accomplished musician himself, got wind that the Coens were casting and pestered his agent and manager to send over a tape, eventually landing himself an audition.

"I knew it was based on Dave Van Ronk and I looked nothing like him," says Isaac. "He was a 6ft 5in, 300lb Swede and I was coming in there like... 'Oh man.'" But then he noticed that the casting execs had with them a picture of the singer-songwriter Ray LaMontagne. "Suddenly, I got some confidence because he's small and dark so I said to the casting director, 'Oh cool, is that a reference?' And they were like, 'No, he just came in here and he killed it.'" Isaac throws his head back and laughs. "They literally said, 'He killed it.' It was so good!"

In the end it was Isaac who killed it in *Inside Llewyn Davis*, with a performance that was funny, sad, cantankerous and moving. The film was nominated for two Oscars and three Golden Globes, one of them for Isaac in the category of "Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture — comedy or musical" (he lost to Leonardo DiCaprio for *The Wolf of Wall Street*). No cigar that time, but in 2016 he won a Golden Globe for his turn as a doomed mayor in David Simon's HBO drama, *Show Me a Hero*. This year, and with peculiar hillbilly affectation, *Vanity Fair* proclaimed Isaac "the best dang actor of his generation". It is not much of a stretch to imagine that, some day very soon, Isaac may become the first Oscar since Hammerstein to win the award whose name he shares. Certainly, the stars seem ready to align.

OF COURSE, LIFE STORIES DO NOT RUN AS neatly as all that and Isaac's could have gone quite differently. He was born Óscar Isaac Hernández Estrada in Guatemala City, to which his father, Óscar, now a pulmonologist, had moved from Washington DC in order to attend medical school (having escaped to the States from Cuba just before the revolution) and where he met Isaac's mother, Eugenia. Five months after Isaac was born, the family →



Abrams had planned to kill Poe off, but Isaac expressed reservations. 'I said that I had already done that role where you kind of set it up for the main people and then you die spectacularly'

Clockwise from top:

Oscar Isaac and Ryan Gosling in Nicolas Winding Refn's stylish crime thriller Drive (2011); Isaac alongside fellow Juilliard graduate Jessica Chastain in A Most Violent Year (2014); in the Coen brothers' Inside Llewyn Davis (2013), Isaac plays the titular folk singer; with Domhnall Gleeson in indie sci-fi Ex Machina (2015)





Camel cashmere blazer,
£1,250, by Paul Smith

Beige technical silk-blend raincoat, £2,310; white/blue striped cotton shirt, £600; black wool trousers, £600, all by Louis Vuitton. Camel suede shoes, stylist's own





Black wool double-breasted coat, £4,150; black silk tie, £155; white cotton shirt, £255; black wool trousers, £625; grey cotton socks, £35; black leather monk straps, £675, all by Dolce & Gabbana

— also including an older sister, Nicole, and later joined by a younger brother, Michael — moved to America in order for Óscar Senior to complete his residencies: first to Baltimore, then New Orleans, eventually settling in Miami when Isaac was six.

Miami didn't sit entirely right with him. "The Latin culture is so strong which was really nice," he says, "but you had to drive everywhere, and it's also strangely quite conservative. Money is valued, and nice cars and clothes, and what you look like, and that can get sort of tedious." Still it was there, aged 11, that he took to the stage for the first time. The Christian middle school he attended put on performances in which the kids would mime to songs telling loosely biblical stories, including one in which Jesus and the Devil take part in a boxing match in heaven (note the word "loosely"). For that one, Isaac played the Devil. In another, he played Jesus calling Lazarus from the grave. "So yeah," he laughs, "I've got the full range!"

He enjoyed the mixture of the attention and the "extreme nature of putting yourself out there in front of a bunch of people", plus it gave him some release from stresses at home: his parents were separating and his mother became ill. His school failed to see these as sufficiently mitigating factors for Isaac's subsequent wayward behaviour and, following an incident with a fire extinguisher, he was expelled. "It wasn't that bad. They wanted me out of there. I was very happy to go."

Following his parents' divorce, he moved with his mother to Palm Beach, Florida, where he enrolled at a public high school. "It was glorious, I loved it," says Isaac. "I loved it so much. I could walk to the beach every day, and go to this wild school where I became friends with so many different kinds of people. I met these guys who lived in the trailer parks in Boynton Beach and started a band, and my mom and my little brother would come and spy on me to see if I was doing drugs or anything, and I never was."

Never?

"No, because I didn't drink till I was, like, 24. Even though I stopped being religious, I liked the individuality of being the guy who didn't do that stuff. Maybe it was the observer part of me... I liked being a little bit detached, and I wasn't interested in doing something that was going to make me lose control."

When he was 14, Isaac and his band-mates

played at a talent show. They chose to perform "Rape Me" by Nirvana. "I remember singing to the parents, 'Rape meeee!'" Isaac laughs so hard he gives a little snort. "Yeah," he says, composing himself again, "we didn't win." But something stuck and Isaac ended up being in a series of ska-punk outfits, first Paperface, then The Worms and later The Blinking Underdogs who, legend has it, would go on to support Green Day. "Supported... Ha! It was a festival..." says Isaac. "But hey, we played the same day, at the same festival, within a few hours of each other." (On YouTube you can find a clip from 2001 of The Blinking Underdogs performing in a battle of the bands contest at somewhere called Spanky's. Isaac is wearing a "New York City" T-shirt and brandishing a wine-coloured Flying V electric guitar.)

Still, Isaac's path was uncertain. At one point he thought about joining the Marines. "The sax player in my band had grown up in a military family so we were like, 'Hey, let's work out and get all ripped and be badassess!'" he says. "I was like, 'Yeah, I'll do combat photography!' My dad was really against it. He said, 'Clinton's just going to make up a war for you guys to go to,' so I had to have the recruiters come all the way down to Miami where my dad was living and they convinced him to let me join. I did the exam, I took the oath, but then we had gotten the money together to record an album with The Worms. I decided I'd join the Reserves instead. I said I wanted to do combat photography. They said, 'We don't do that in the Reserves, but we can give you anti-tank?' Ha! I was like, 'It's a liiiittle different to what I was thinking...'"

Even when he started doing a few professional theatre gigs in Miami he was still toying with the idea of a music career, until one day, while in New York playing a young Fidel Castro in an off-Broadway production of Rogelio Martinez's play, *When it's Cocktail Time in Cuba*, he happened to pass by renowned performing arts school Juilliard. On a whim, he asked for an audition. He was told the deadline had passed. He insisted. They gave him a form. He filled it in and brought it back the next day. They post-dated it. He got in. And the rest is history. Only it wasn't.

"In the second year they would do cuts," Isaac says. "If you don't do better they kick you out. All the acting teachers wanted me on probation, because they didn't think I was trying hard enough." Not for the first or last time, he

held his ground. "It was just to spur me to do better I think, but I definitely argued."

He stayed for the full course at Juilliard, though it was a challenge, not only because he'd relaxed his own non-drinking rule but also because he was maintaining a long-distance relationship with a girlfriend back in Florida. "For me, the twenties were the more difficult part of life. Four years is just... masochistic. We were a particularly close group but still, it's really intense." (Among his fellow students at the time were the actress Jessica Chastain, with whom he starred in the 2014 mob drama *A Most Violent Year*, and Sam Gold, his director in *Hamlet*.) He says he broadly kept it together: "I was never a mess, I just had a lot of confusion." He got himself an agent in the graduation scrum, and soon started picking up work: a *Law & Order* here, a Shakespeare in the Park there; even, in 2006, a biblical story to rival his early efforts, playing Joseph in *The Nativity Story* (the first film to hold its premiere at the Vatican, no less).

By the time he enrolled at Juilliard he had already dropped "Hernández" and started going by Oscar Isaac, his two first given names. And for good reason. "When I was in Miami, there were a couple of other Oscar Hernándezes I would see at auditions. All [casting directors] would see me for was 'the gangster' or whatever, so I was like, 'Well, let me see if this helps.' I remember there was a casting director down there because [*Men in Black* director] Barry Sonnenfeld was doing a movie; she said, 'Let's bring in this Oscar Isaac,' and he was like, 'No no no! I just want Cubans! I saw Barry Sonnenfeld a couple of years ago and I told him that story — 'I don't want a Jew, I want a Cuban!'"

Perhaps it's a sad indictment of the entertainment industry that a Latino actor can't expect a fair run at parts without erasing some of the ethnic signifiers in his own name, but on a personal basis at least, Isaac's diverse role roster speaks to the canniness of his decision. He has played an English king in Ridley Scott's *Robin Hood* (2010), a Russian security guard in Madonna's Edward-and-Mrs-Simpson drama *W.E.* (2011), an Armenian medical student in Terry George's *The Promise* (2017) and — yes, Barry — a small, dark American Jew channelling a large blond Swede.

But then, of course, there are roles he's played where ethnicity was all but irrelevant and talent was everything. Carey Mulligan's →



Left, from top:

In Star Wars: The Last Jedi, Isaac reprises his role as wisecracking, Resistance fighter pilot Poe Dameron; Isaac plays a shady insurance investigator in George Clooney's forthcoming film, Suburbicon



‘Acting is the only framework where you can give expression to such intense emotions. Otherwise anywhere else is pretty inappropriate, unless you’re just in a room screaming to yourself’

Right:

Isaac in the title role of Sam Gold's off-Broadway production of Hamlet, at New York's Public Theater



ex-con husband Standard in Nicolas Windig Refn's *Drive* in 2011 (another contender for his "spectacular deaths" series); mysterious technocrat Nathan Bateman in the beautifully poised sci-fi *Ex Machina* (2014) written and directed by Alex Garland (with whom he has also shot *Annihilation* — dashing between different sound stages at Pinewood while shooting *The Last Jedi* — which is due out next year). Or this month's *Suburbicon*, a neat black comedy directed by George Clooney from an ancient Coen brothers script, in which Isaac cameos as a claims investigator looking into some dodgy paperwork filed by Julianne Moore and Matt Damon, and lights up every one of his brief scenes.

Isaac is a very modern kind of actor: one who shows range and versatility without being bland; who is handsome with his dark, intense eyes, heavy brows and thick curls, but not so freakishly handsome that it is distracting; who shows a casual disregard for the significance of celebrity and keeps his family, including his father, who remarried and had another son and daughter, close. It's a testament to his skill that when he takes on a character, be it English royal or Greenwich Village pauper, it feels like — with the possible exception of Ray LaMontagne — it could never have been anyone else.

TODAY, THOUGH, HE'S A DANISH PRINCE. To say that Isaac's turn in *Hamlet* has caused a frenzy in New York would be something of an understatement. Certainly, it's a sell-out. The Sunday before we meet, Al Pacino had been in. So scarce are tickets that Isaac's own publicist says she's unlikely to be able to get me one, and as soon as our interview is over I hightail it to the Public Theater to queue up to be put on the waiting list for returns for tonight's performance. (I am seventh in line, and in my shameless desperation I tell the woman in front of me that I've flown over from London just to interview Isaac in the hope that she might let me jump the queue. She ponders it for a nanosecond, before another woman behind me starts talking about how *her* day job involves painting pictures of chimpanzees, and I lose the crowd.)

Clearly, *Hamlet* is occupying a great deal of Isaac's available brain space right now, and not just the fact that he's had to memorise approximately 1,500 lines. "Even tonight it's different, what the play means to me," he says. "It's almost like a religious text, because

it has the ambiguity of the *Bible* where you can look at one line and it can mean so many different things depending on how you meditate on it. Even when I have a night where I feel not particularly connected emotionally, it can still teach me. I'll say a line and I'll say, 'Ah, that's good advice, Shakespeare, thank you.'"

Hamlet resonates with Isaac for reasons that he would never have foreseen or have wished for. While playing a young man mourning the untimely death of his father, Isaac was himself a young man mourning the untimely death of his mother, who died in February after an illness. Doing the play became a way to process his loss.

"It's almost like this is the only framework where you can give expression to such intense emotions. Otherwise anywhere else is pretty inappropriate, unless you're just in a room screaming to yourself," he says. "This play is a beautiful morality tale about how to get through grief; to experience it every night for the last four months has definitely been cathartic but also educational; it has given structure to something that felt so overwhelming."

In March, a month after Eugenia died, Isaac and Lind married, and then in April Eugene, named in remembrance of his late grandmother, was born. I ask Isaac about the shift in perspective that happens when you become a parent; whether he felt his own focus switch from being a son to being a father.

"It happened in a very dramatic way," he says. "In a matter of three months my mother passed and my son was born, so that transition was very alive, to the point where I was telling my mom, 'I think you're going to see him on the way out, tell him to listen to me as much as he can...'" He gives another laugh, but flat this time. "It was really tough because for me she was the only true example of unconditional love. It's painful to know that that won't exist for me anymore, other than me giving it to him. So now this isn't happening" — he raises his arms towards the ceiling, gesturing a flow coming down towards him — "but now it goes this way" — he brings his arms down, making the same gesture, but flowing from him to the floor.

Does performing *Hamlet*, however pertinent its themes, ever feel like a way of refracting his own experiences, rather than feeling them in their rawest form?

"Yeah it is," he says, "I'm sure when it's

over I don't know how those things will live." He pauses. "I'm a little bit... I don't know if 'concerned' is the right word, but as there's only two weeks left of doing it, I'm curious to see what's on the other end, when there's no place to put it all."

It's a thoughtful, honest answer; one that doesn't shy away from the emotional complexities of what he's experiencing and is still to face, but admits to his own ignorance of what comes next. Because, although Isaac is clearly dedicated to his current lot, he has also suffered enough slings and arrows to know where self-determination has its limits.

What he does know is happening on the other end of *Hamlet* is "disconnection", also known as a holiday, and he plans to travel with Lind to Maine where her documentary, *Bobbi Jene*, is screening at a film festival. Then he will fly to Buenos Aires for a couple of months filming *Operation Finale*, a drama about the 1960 Israeli capture of Adolf Eichmann which Isaac is producing and in which he also stars as Mossad agent Peter Malkin, with Eichmann played by Sir Ben Kingsley. At some point after that he will get sucked into the vortex of promotion for *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, of which today's interview is an early glimmer.

But before that, he will unlock the immaculate black bicycle that he had chained up outside the hotel and disappear back into Brooklyn. Later, he will take the subway to Manhattan an hour-and-a-half or so before curtain. To get himself ready, and if the mood takes him, he will listen to Venezuelan musician Arca's self-titled album or Sufjan Stevens' *Carrie and Lowell*, light a candle, and look at a picture of his mother that he keeps in his dressing room.

Then, just before seven o'clock, he will make his way to the stage where, for the next four hours, he will make the packed house believe he is thinking Hamlet's thoughts for the very first time, and strut around in his underpants feigning madness, and — for reasons that make a lot more sense if you're there which, thanks to a last-minute phone-call from the office of someone whose name I never did catch, I was — stab a lasagna. And then at the end of Act V, when Hamlet lies dead, and as lightning staggers across the night sky outside the theatre, finally bringing the promised drama to the Manhattan skyline, the audience, as one, will rise. **3** *Star Wars: The Last Jedi is out on 15 December*

All by Louis Vuitton, as before



Lee Broom, interior designer

Alessi Big Shoom fruit bowl by Nigel Coates

£190; alessi.com

"This was the first designer product for my home which I bought. What I really love is its simplicity and its organic fluid shape. The reflective mirror finish of the stainless steel gives it a very luxurious feel but in

a minimal way. It's one of those pieces that looks equally as good on its own or with objects inside. It has pride of place in my London apartment on my coffee table."

The tasteful eight

An octet of eminent designers spotlight their favourite products

Compiled by Teo van den Broeke and Charlie Teasdale



Berluti

Pink silk jacket, £1,920; khaki cotton shirt, £500; charcoal cashmere vest, £730; black cotton trousers, £550, all by Berluti

Bjarke Ingels, architect
Wooden dolls by Alexander Girard
£70 each; vitra.com

"I love candles and I love the little life they spread in the home. But candles actually pollute the indoor air quality with particles and they tend to burn down if forgotten. Enter the digital candle conceived by Waldemeyer for Ingo Maurer.

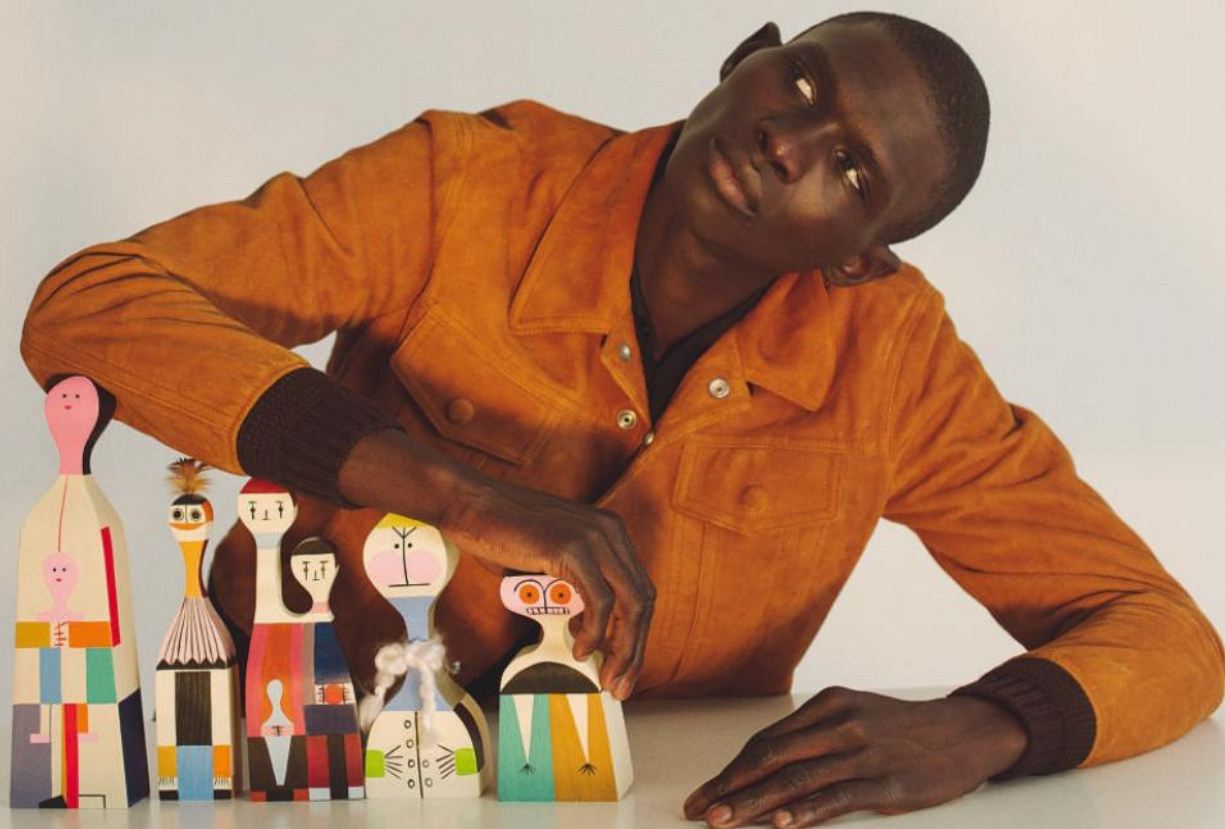
You'll find my digital candle next to a bowl of Alexander Girard's wooden dolls — he's a genius designer who brought colour and pattern back to the international style of modernism."

Photographs by
Ana Cuba

Fashion by
Catherine Hayward

Saint
Laurent

Cognac suede
jacket, £2,910;
black viscose
twill shirt,
£390, both by
Saint Laurent



Sebastian Bergne, product designer
Drop jug by Sebastian Bergne
£90; sebastianbergne.com

"My everyday table is populated with many things I use and love. The crockery design I've been enjoying for 20 years is the Montefeltro stoneware range designed by Franco Bucci. The tools are from Achille Castiglioni's Dry cutlery

range. To wash it all down, water or wine is served in one of my own creations: the Drop jug. It first appeared as a prototype for testing and has since become a regular. I'll let you judge it for yourselves but the fact that it is still there says something."

Burberry

Black cashmere
Chesterfield double-
breasted coat,
£2,895; white cotton
poplin evening shirt,
£350; blue gem-
embellished brass
brooch, £695,
all by Burberry



John Pawson, architectural designer
Wishbone chair by Hans Wegner
£650; conranshop.co.uk

"The spare simplicity of the Danish craft tradition gave the country's design culture a visual sensibility that allowed a form of modernity to develop that was not a rupture with the past. Hans Wegner, a furniture designer who originally trained

as a cabinet-maker, produced a series of chairs that embodies this continuity. For me, the most beautiful, because it is the most refined and the most pared down, is the Wishbone. It's light, strong and everyone looks good sitting in it."



Lanvin

Green wool jacket, £2,105;
green wool trousers, £570;
brown calf suede belt, £370; black/
grey calf skin boots, £890,
all by Lanvin

Margaret Howell, fashion designer
Leonardo table by Achille Castiglioni
 £2,195; twentytwentyone.com

"I bought this table in the Seventies when I started out designing from home and needed a bench-height worktop to draft my patterns. The functional flexibility and adjustable height of the Leonardo was perfect (it works equally well at

table height for dinner parties). Whenever I've moved, it's come with me. I never tire of it. I still keep the thoughtful booklet on how to look after various materials that came with the table — a mark of respect for good design made to last."



Margaret Howell

Stone matte twill shirt, £245; black paisley silk tie, £85; black cotton-canvas trousers, £425, all by Margaret Howell. Black nylon trainers, £225, by Mizuno for Margaret Howell

Joe Casely-Hayford, fashion designer
Vertigo Pendant lamp by Constance Guisset
 £840; hollowaysofludlow.com

"The Vertigo Pendant lamp was designed by Constance Guisset in 2010. I was immediately attracted by its strong emotional presence. Being extremely light, the Vertigo lamp responds to the slightest draught, when lit it turns softly, projecting

a graphic shadow onto surrounding walls. I love this unique organic element. The Vertigo light sits comfortably in my drawing room juxtaposed with Georgian and brutalist pieces; existing in an environment of perfect harmonious discord."

Casely-Hayford

Navy wool coat, £1,470; black/white/navy striped wool jumper, £390; navy/grey checked wool trousers, £360, all by Casely-Hayford. Black leather brogues, £475, by Church's



Sir Paul Smith, fashion designer

Type 75 mini desk lamp by Anglepoise + Paul Smith

£145; anglepoise.com

"The Anglepoise Type 75 is a design classic. The perfect lamp for everyone from a student for their first desk to a grown-up for their office. It's been such an honour to recolour the lamp several

times over. My Type 75 sits pride of place in what I call my 'jet lag' room which is the corner of my house where I slip off in the middle of the night to do some work."

Paul Smith

Grey checked wool suit, £1,145; silk-blend printed bomber jacket, £585, both by Paul Smith



Yves Béhar, industrial designer
RAR chair by Eames
 £465; conranshop.co.uk

Swiss designer Yves Behar, who is based in California, is best known for his innovative "one laptop per child" project and is the brains behind the Jawbone bluetooth speaker company. His selection, the Eames RAR (Rocking Armchair

Rod Base), was designed by Charles and Ray Eames in 1950. Featuring maplewood rockers and a polypropylene seat, the chair is now made under licence by Vitra and combines comfort with modernism and a relaxed sense of fun.



Calvin Klein 205W39NYC

Camel cashmere double-breasted overcoat, £3,160; light blue leather shirt, £1,915; black cotton roll-neck, £215; light blue leather trousers, £1,915; burgundy leather silver toe-plate Chelsea boots, £850, all by Calvin Klein 205W39NYC

Lighting assistant: Matthew Lawes | Fashion assistant: Emie James-Crook | Digital operator: Nick Collins | Grooming: Anna Chapman using Mac Cosmetics and Bumble and Bumble | Model: Fernando Cabral @ Next Management | See Stockists page for details



House and homme

What men don't talk about when
we don't talk about interior design

By Tom Dyckhoff

Illustration by Klaus Kremmerz

'A man yearns for quarters of his own. More than a place to hang his hat, a man dreams of his own domain, a place that is exclusively his'
— Hugh Hefner, *Playboy*, September 1956

SAY WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT HUGH HEFNER, RIP, but there was a man who understood the importance of a well-plumped cushion. For amid the obituaries and hullabaloo that followed the death of the Playboy tycoon, one small contribution to world culture Hefner made has been left unnoticed: interior design.

In its September 1956 issue, *Playboy* magazine ran its first feature on the perfect man's home. It was a pad, of course, for "the urban bachelor," wrote Hefner, "a man who enjoys good living, a sophisticated connoisseur of the lively arts, of food and drink, and congenial companions of both sexes. A man very much, perhaps, like you." In 1956, men — certainly heterosexual men, certainly playboys — were not supposed to have opinions about interior design, not ones they actually voiced, let alone published. They were not really meant to have opinions about the home at all. They (rarely their wives) might own a home. They might

lay their head down after a hard day's work in a home. But the home was not theirs. The home was the woman's domain, as it had been for two centuries. Men were just lodgers (though, admittedly, they did rule the rest of the universe beyond the front door, so let's not feel too sorry for them).

In 1956, remember, America was in the throes of a suburban revolution, its cities ballooning by the minute with picket fences and "ideal homes" lived in by bored housewives hooked on Valium and, usually late home from the office, their equally bored husbands, hooked on bourbon. Don and Betty Draper. The American Dream.

Hefner, like Don Draper, had another dream, a dream of freedom, for men at least. Wives would still be tethered to the pills and the kitchen sink for some time, but men were offered an escape, a new kind of home — a playground. Hefner's perfect bachelor pad was in the city. It had no "cell-like rooms" (words pointedly chosen), like the suburban detacheds his playboys were escaping, but an open plan of different "zones", in which the bachelor could, in Hefner's words, "perform for an admiring →

It was the Industrial Revolution that separated work from home, the public from the private, and condemned men and women to their respective prisons

audience”, act out different versions of himself other than the standard roles on offer to him at the time: the adulterous husband, say, the Marlboro Man, DIY dad.

He could, for instance, cook. Cooking, like taking an interest in soft furnishings was, in 1956, not something a real man was meant to do, unless French. In the *Playboy* pad, though, he could dazzle his audience with crêpes flambées. He could take an interest in design, too, for the playboy was allowed to shop, at least for some things, like shelving systems and designer chairs, not loo rolls and coasters. Not that you’d guess it from the look of this apartment’s “unique kitchen stool”, “constructed from a rugged, contoured tractor seat” (ew, no thanks). But the playboy was at least acquainted with Charles and Ray Eames. He had read his Le Corbusier. Why? Because this man also reads something other than the sports pages. His perfect apartment has at its heart a study, “the sanctum sanctorum”, wrote Hefner, for the studying of Corbusier, Saul Bellow and pornography.

There are gadgets — of course there are — though the stereotype of a geek glued to tech in his man cave is still novel in 1956. My favourite: an “ultrasonic dishwasher”, which “uses inaudible hi-fi sound to eliminate manual washing.” We’re still waiting for that particular gizmo to hit Currys. This apartment, though, does have built-in speakers, remote-controlled hi-fis and buttons that “control every light in the place”. There’s a “control panel” in his bed’s headboard, too, which, at the touch of a button, rather creepily locks the front door and windows, not because Hefner is rightly concerned about security in the big bad city, but to ensure his quarry doesn’t escape. For be in no doubt that this bachelor pad has only one function: it is a spider’s web, its well-plumped cushions and concern for design designed for seducing a woman (never a wife; NEVER another man).

So, yes, guess what, the *Playboy* bachelor is hardly a pioneer of second-wave feminism. Note that this “perfect man’s home” is a “place that is exclusively his”. There’s no room for wives, or partners of any persuasion, to move in, only to visit as “congenial companions”. Kids? You kidding? Hefner widened the role models available to men at home beyond the adulterous husband, the Marlboro Man, DIY dad, true — the creepy lothario in the spiders’ web, perhaps, the design buff with low-level OCD, the geek in his man cave — but he didn’t widen the repertoire any further. His playboys are still basically lodgers in their own homes, roving commitment-phobes settling

only briefly in a domestic setting for sex, an Old Fashioned and, if I must, maybe an hour or three of sleep. Basically, James Bond (published four years before the *Playboy* pad). Or, a decade later, Alfie.

THE VERY IDEA THAT AN ASPIRING MAN, “a man very much, perhaps, like you,” might want to *enjoy* not escape their home was hardly new. From Ancient Rome through to the golden age of the British stately home in the 18th century, men usually lived *and* worked at home, if they were lucky to have a home at all; and those of means spent fortunes on and took interest in making that home look amazing. Their home was an extension of their selves. Even in the classic stately home, though, there were gender rules, as any keen observer of *Downton Abbey* can see.

The drawing room was a woman’s space, decorated in pale “feminine” colours (pinks, yellows) and prints (florals), where women “withdrew” after dinner to drink tea and exchange significant looks. The dining room was a man’s space, decorated in geometric prints and dark “masculine” colours (reds, and, if you can call it a colour, brown), where the men stayed after dinner to smoke cigars, discuss grouse shooting and stiffen their upper lips. And so began centuries of stereotypes. Women = flowers. Men, you can have any colour so long as it’s brown. Maybe black. Fabrics for the ladies. Horny leather and wood for the boys.

It was the Industrial Revolution that separated work from home, the public from the private, and condemned men and women to their respective prisons. So, by 1956, the very fact that a home appeared in a men’s magazine at all remains — to this day — a quietly radical act, progress of a kind. *Playboy* continued for decades to publish articles and photo pads (“The Weekend Hideaway”, “The *Playboy* Townhouse”...), and advice, yes, on the correct positioning of correctly plumped cushions on the well-bred man’s sofa (never at an angle). Through it, and other pioneers in the Fifties and Sixties like Terence Conran, our idea of what masculinity in the home might be subtly shifted. And then stalled.

Today, men are generally offered exactly the same role models of how to be at home they were offered in 1956. The creepy lothario in the spider’s web, the design buff with low-level OCD, the geek in his man cave. The latter, in particular, has risen to cultural prominence. Just watch any film starring Seth Rogan or Simon Pegg, or the shit-tips, albeit

We moisturise.
 We exfoliate.
 We work out.
 We come out.
 We wax.
 We read feminism.
 We are aware
 of the socially
 constructed
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 gender identity.
 But taking an
 interest in our
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 weirdly taboo

intellectual's shit-tips, inhabited by Sherlock Holmes or Doctor Who. The design buff with low-level OCD, though, came out big time in the Nineties when *Grand Designs* first aired, only this time cross-bred with that older male stereotype the playboys were trying to escape — DIY dad — giving birth to the New Man, manly enough to hew pine trees, sensitive enough to apply moisturiser and have an opinion on kitchen worktop surfaces, but not so sensitive to care about cushions.

Our ideas about masculinity, though, have flourished, and are flourishing. It is an ongoing project, of course, as the unending presence of Piers Morgan in our lives proves. But, we moisturise. We exfoliate. We work out. We come out. We wax. We read first, second, third-wave feminism. We are aware of the socially constructed nature of gender identity. But taking an interest in our homes still seems weirdly taboo, like an assault on some mythical masculinity. Like it was 1956.

BUT I KNOW THIS IS A LIE. Why? I have the statistics. International Wallpaper Week took place in October. You didn't know? See how imprisoned you are in your masculinity? Or, hold on, did you secretly know but were too scared to say? Because a poll of 1,500 people during the week found that 85 per cent of men are actively (and, before you ask, willingly) involved in the interior design of their homes. The average man (again, of his own free will) shops for things for the house at least three times a month, artwork, throws and fresh flowers being among his top purchases. Forty-eight per cent of men regularly shop for scented candles. And I, reader, am one of them (I like the posh smelly ones, too, so there). Though I've never actually seen my fellow 48 per centers at the till. A glorious 54 per cent buy cushions. I confess: I have indeed bought cushions. While 53 per cent of men say they spend more money on homewares than on nights out, clothes, and, shame on you, technology. We even spend more than women: £1,304 a year versus £1,141.

Not that this appears to have made home life any more harmonious. Indeed, having opinions about interior design seems to have added to domestic discord, perhaps because 47 per cent of men reckon they have a better eye for interior design than their partners and are probably not shy of saying so. I'm frankly astonished that only 30 per cent of men have argued with their partners over decisions in a furniture shop or DIY store, though less astonished (from personal experience) that rows at home tend to focus on wallpaper design, how to make the bed correctly and a failure to plump sofa cushions.

I'm with Hugh Hefner on this.

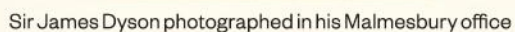
There are ulterior motives, as there were with the design of the *Playboy* pad. Of men polled, 85 per cent think a stylish home will help them attract the opposite sex (and, I'm sure, the same one). But, the survey concluded, there does seem to be a genuine interest in the home, and a generational shift in attitudes. It's OK, men. You can like wallpaper. And, the best bit? *You* don't have to put it up. You can get a man in. Or a woman.

I know, we shouldn't trust one poll. But even if it's halfway correct it shows, not before time, that something is changing. We just have to be out and proud about it. As in so many aspects of modern manners, Kanye West shows us the way. West has opinions about design, and he's not afraid to share them. Indeed, "the world," he told Harvard University design students in 2013, "can be saved through design."

West has collaborated with design luminaries like Peter Saville and Rem Koolhaas, and takes a particular interest in where he lives, in the manner of an 18th century aristocrat. In one of his early homes, an apartment in Manhattan, he went full-on minimalist, employing architect Claudio Silvestrin to deliver monastic bling. Last year, he was reportedly so aghast at the furniture choices made for his Calabasas home by interior designer Sandy Gallin, he immediately removed the offending items, and, when it was clear he couldn't return them to the shops, put them in storage and bought some more.

Kim Kardashian West, it was reported, is becoming rather "annoyed" by her husband's interior design opinions and the amount of money he is spending on them. Though there are options for the tighter budget. Last year, West told BBC Radio 1 he wanted to collaborate on furniture with Ikea: "Yo Ikea, allow Kanye to create." The Swedish homewares giant responded on Facebook with a mock-up Yeezy bed, "Hej Kanye, we'd love to see what you'd create... we could make you Famous!"

Men, if Kanye West says it's OK to like interior design, it's OK to like interior design. You don't have to be a playboy. You don't have to be DIY dad. There are other ways to be a man. There are other ways to live at home. It's OK *not* to like interior design, too. Your man cave can smell like Jeremy Clarkson's underpants. What do I care? Just be happy with who you are and where you live. And if you love cushions (plumped, though, and never at an angle), say it loud. I love cushions (plumped, though, and never at an angle)! I love scented candles! I love antimacassars! No, hold on, that's just weird. **2**



SIR JAMES DYSON

Esquire Design Special

I ALWAYS WANT TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT. That's just the way I'm built. I can't bear to do the same thing twice. I could never ride a horse properly because trotting is just utterly repetitive. It's just not in my psyche.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE A SHORT ATTENTION SPAN. I'll work as long as it takes and listen for as long as it takes, or go at a problem for ages. No-one will dare to interrupt or ask me to come down for supper or something if it'll stop me doing it...

YOU HAVE TO BE OBSSSSIVE, but also know when to stop. Or at least to know when to stop boring people. The true answer is you'll never really stop but there's a point where what you've been working on is better than anything else. Even if you know you can do better.

WHEN YOU DO SOMETHING you're really proud of, get rid of it and try something else. I had a very good teacher at school who told me this. When you paint something on the canvas you really like, and you're really proud of, scrape it off, because it's going to blind you to what you do elsewhere in the painting. It's actually true to almost anything else in life.

I'M NOT ABOUT TO BUILD A SPACESHIP. I'm not trying to outdo anyone, I just want to do really good products and develop the technology in those products, because that's the bit that really interests me: a product with better technology. So, I'm not trying to do an electric car, or a spaceship, I'm developing the technology and hope to make a really good car because that's what I do, and that's true with the hair-dryer, and everything I've done, I hope.

STRANGELY, EVEN THOUGH I'M NOT a Japanese, Issey Miyake's clothes fit me very well. The same is true of Yamamoto. I go to other shops and things don't fit me, so I tend to stick to them. I'm a funny sort of mixture in the clothes I wear. Issey Miyake is a friend and I've worn a lot of his clothes, and I designed his fashion show in Paris a few years ago.

IT'S IMPORTANT WHAT PEOPLE WEAR. Because clothes feel different, it makes you feel different, it is a sort of expression of who you are. It's true of children, too. To see them in wonderful clothes is good, but to see children in clothes that are not is slightly off-putting. I shouldn't say that but it's true. It's uplifting to see good design.

I THOUGHT ENGINEERS were pretty boring, but I'd never met one. Then at the Royal College we had lectures from a structural engineer who

'The worst thing
is to be satisfied.

I am restless
and not happy
all the time. And

I know that
satisfaction is
unattainable in
what I do and
that's fine'

talked about designing bridges. He explained their engineering in a very simple, clear way and I understood that, in fact, engineering is elegant, engineering is beautiful.

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT EXPERIENCE is a bad thing because everything's changing all the time. What works today or worked yesterday won't necessarily work tomorrow. I would rather people approach everything in a naïve manner and look at the problem as though they've never seen such a problem before. I was told that when I was 20, and at 70 I fundamentally believe it.

I'M SCARED ALL THE TIME and I jolly well should be. I'm afraid of failure, of the future. Am I doing the right thing? It's in my stomach.

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO FEAR of new technology taking over our jobs. New technology creates jobs. I have an eternal optimism about that. The more we've added things about artificial intelligence and software, electronics, the more people we've had to employ to cope with that broad range. For example, the production lines that makes all our [appliance] motors are totally automated. We want it like that because we want utter perfection.

THE WORST THING IS TO BE SATISFIED. I am restless and not happy all the time. And I know that satisfaction is unattainable in what I do and that's fine.

DRIVING IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO SWITCH OFF. I'm quite good at switching off. Deirdre,

my wife, is very good at listening to what's going on and then quickly moving on to other things. She's been a fantastic support and she's an artist and designer in her own right so she understands the need for a project and the enthusiasm and frustrations that come with it.

ELECTRIC CARS ARE GOING TO CHANGE the world. I'm not a car obsessive and that's not why we're doing one. I want to do a car a) because I want to get rid of nasty fumes and b) because it happens to use the very technologies I've been developing in a serious way. Even new cars today are polluting and if we can make a better car that will be good.

MY CHILDREN ARE MUCH BETTER PEOPLE than I am. They've got a huge number of qualities I don't have, but it's lovely to see that.


I'M PROBABLY A BETTER GRANDFATHER than father. Just because I was travelling so much. I spent a lot of time with them, playing with them and doing things with them, but when you travel a lot it's not just the time you're gone, it's the effect on your circadian rhythm — you get back home and you're exhausted.

ROUTINES ARE ONE OF LIFE'S ATROCITIES. I hate routine so I try and change that as much as I can. When it comes to lifestyle, I try to eat healthily and drink reasonably healthily and go for walks. I would run every day if I had the time but I run twice a week.

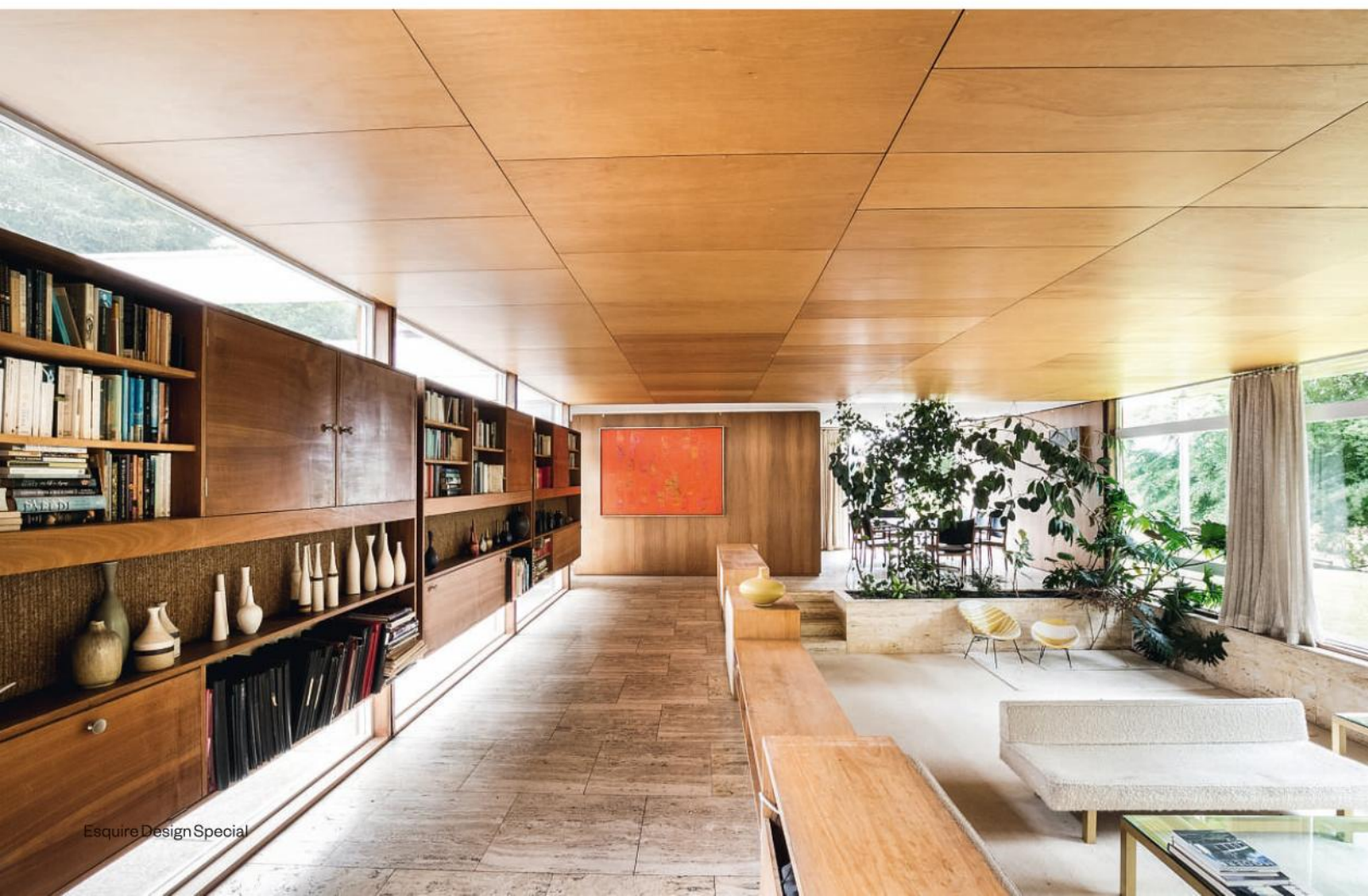
WHY DO I LIKE RUNNING? I didn't say I like it. I know it's doing good. I do love that sense of freedom, seeing the countryside, feeling the cold, the heat, the sun, the rain, being out against the elements running up and down hills. It clears your head.

I DON'T WANT TO DO what anybody else is doing because that doesn't give me any advantage, I've got to do what they're not doing.

I FEEL REALLY HAPPY HERE IN ENGLAND. I was brought up in Norfolk, now I live in Gloucestershire. The climate and the sky and the smells in Provence probably make that my favourite place to go away to, though. The colours and the light, the sky, the smells and the wine — it helps.

THERE'S NO ONE PROBLEM I'm especially proud of solving. I have had very little problems that have been just as difficult to solve as the ones that apparently made a huge difference. I don't distinguish between the major ones and the minor ones because they can all be irritants. And there's always more. 

Below and right: Klein House, Selkirk, Scottish Borders



Right moves

How two former magazine journalists rewrote the rulebook on estate agency, not to mention property porn

By Tim Lewis



EGLON HOUSE LANDED like a tasteful modernist spaceship on a mews in London's Primrose Hill sometime towards the end of 2015. The response, mainly, was bemusement. The site had previously been a shell-casing factory during WWI, a dairy for the cattle that grazed on the local fields, and latterly a museum and a recording studio where Ultravox made "Vienna". In its latest incarnation, the land has been developed into two distinct buildings set around a cobbled courtyard: an Art Deco five-bedroom townhouse; and a double-height, museum-grade art gallery. It's a live-work lair for the family-oriented Bond villain. The sections are connected by a subterranean floor that has this bizarre property's most fantastical feature. With a whirl and a whoosh, the floor sinks from beneath your feet, fills with water and becomes a swimming pool. At one end is a three-metre-wide cinema screen — waterproof, naturally — one of the largest, HD LED displays ever made.

No one entirely knew what to make of Eglon House. At 13,154sq ft, it is practically the size of an aircraft hangar. Your neighbour on one side will be the Al-Fayed family; on the other are council tenants, who hang washing outside their front doors. After it was put on the market in December 2015, *The Daily Telegraph* asked: "Is it a home, an office, a work of art or a tax wheeze?"

A spokesperson for Savills, the upmarket estate agent instructed to sell Eglon House, outlined who they thought would be interested: "The successful buyer will no doubt be globally nomadic with multiple homes in America and elsewhere in Europe, spending time in key cities around the world." Early on, there were murmurs that an art foundation and a famous musician were seriously considering it. Oh, yes, the price: £24m. Twenty. Four. Million. Pounds.

There was an initial flurry of viewings, but nothing came of them; it was offered for rental, at £130,000 a month,

but there were no takers. So this summer, the owner of Eglon House — who prefers to remain anonymous — placed a call to The Modern House estate agency to see if they could sell it. The Modern House, founded in 2005 by Albert Hill and Matt Gibberd, prides itself on a very different approach to most estate agents. You will never have seen its shops on the high street, because there aren't any. Since the beginning, it has been online only. It specialises in properties it decides are architecturally arresting or allow living "in a modern way".

It used to be said the search for property was all about location, location, location. Hill and Gibberd wouldn't agree with that. To them, contentment is most likely to be found in a beautiful, considered house that allows for open-plan living. And that means you might have to be flexible about where it is. The Modern House is predicated on the idea that many estate agents fundamentally do not understand design and lifestyle.

Matt Gibberd and Albert Hill, founders of property sales website The Modern House



There are signs that Hill and Gibberd are making some headway in the argument. The Modern House has sold more than 700 properties in the last decade across the UK. On its website now are more than 150 impeccable, elegant apartments and houses to buy. "Statistically, over the past six months we have grown 35 per cent in terms of revenue," says Hill, "whereas Foxtons, Savills etc have all had a negative last six months. So we're doing something right."

At a time when the housing market is flatlining, especially in London, The Modern House is bucking the trend. In the past year, its clean, uncluttered website — closer to an interiors magazine than a property portal — has received almost 3m visits, an increase of 50 per cent on the previous 12 months. Its carefully curated Instagram feed, which features images from houses for sale alongside motivational quotes from modernist icons such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, now has over 90,000 followers.

These include an above-average proportion of architects, artists and designers.

So it was a smart move by the owner of Eglon House to engage Hill and Gibberd. The Modern House would reach a different audience to Savills and, in its marketing, it would concentrate more on the architectural merit of the building. There is an intriguing story to tell here: Eglon House was designed to be a modern updating of an Art Deco classic called *Maison de Verre*, built in Paris in 1932 by the architect Pierre Chareau. (In 2007, *The New York Times* called *Maison de Verre* simply: "The Best House in Paris.") Mind-scrambling attention to detail had been committed to mirroring the effect in Primrose Hill: this included using the same moulds for the iconic glass blocks that Chareau created for the exterior of his building; the sofas, light fittings, even the exact shade of blue that was used for the master suite's carpet in Paris have been painstakingly reproduced.

"It's mad isn't it?" says Gibberd, who is 40 and tends to wear translucent spectacles and capacious, monochromatic clothing, some of it made by his wife, the designer Faye Toogood. "What an incredibly audacious thing to build." Hill, also 40, slightly less fashion-forward, adds, "It's a one-off. It's amazing."

Appearing on *The Modern House* can give a property, especially a new build such as Eglon House, a status usually only conferred by a RIBA architectural award. "There's definitely a validation," Gibberd agrees. "And I don't think there are other brands in estate agency that provide a positive image like that. They are coming to us for that, and I think Eglon House is coming to us for our ability just to reach into the cracks between things and access a very unique and powerful network of people. With a house like that, when the conventional route hasn't worked, that's what you've got to do. You've got to think more laterally on the marketing as well." →

Slip House, Lyham Road, London SW2



In late October, Eglon House dropped on The Modern House website, now a steal at £21m.

THE FIRST PROPERTY The Modern House marketed was also an unusual house that traditional estate agents were struggling to bend their heads round. Six Pillars in Sydenham Hill, south-east London, is not especially welcoming or exciting from the front: it is a white rectangle set back from the road, with a thin horizontal strip of window. The main materials are London-stock brick and reinforced concrete, which has been used to fashion the half-dozen pilotis that lend the house its name. And it's these pillars that make this building, completed in 1934, so revolutionary. Because of the strength they provide, the interior can be open and flooded with light. The architects, Valentine Harding and Berthold Lubetkin, the latter best known for the spiral-ramped penguin pool at London Zoo, had been liberated to create balconies that nod to Le Corbusier and

staircases that twist like helixes. Lubetkin believed that climbing any set of stairs should be "a dance".

Albert Hill was not even an estate agent when he first saw Six Pillars in 2005. He was a journalist, primarily an editor at *Wallpaper**. But he was very familiar with Lubetkin, one of the defining modernist architects, and he couldn't believe that this house — one of the rare private homes in London that Lubetkin had worked on — had been on the market for months and hadn't sold.

"So I got the number of the guy who owns Six Pillars and phoned him up," says Hill. "This was off the back of nothing. I said, 'I've got this specialist estate agency.' He was very well-spoken and he said 'Fantastic, I've been waiting for someone like you to come along.'"

Was Hill completely riffing? "Yeah, just making it up," he laughs. "And he said, 'I'm going away on holiday for three weeks but let's talk when I get back.'"

In those three weeks, Hill created a website for his new company, and he

made contact with a school friend, Matt Gibberd, who had previously been a senior editor at *The World of Interiors* magazine and had just started in the first year at the Bartlett School of Architecture. There was an element of destiny in his gravitation towards that career: Sir Frederick Gibberd, his grandfather, was a modernist architect who designed the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral with its distinctive crown of thorns (you might know it as "Paddy's Wigwam") and the London Central Mosque on the edge of Regent's Park; his father, too, is an architect. Gibberd agreed to start work on The Modern House — the name came from a book written in 1934 by FRS Yorke, a friend of his grandfather's — while also continuing his architecture studies.

Hill and Gibberd used their contacts to get press coverage for Six Pillars, but results were not instant. This, after all, was the era of the Foxtons Mini, ubiquitous in central London, and glass-fronted branches full of aggressive, shiny-suited "negotiators". "I remember in particular

Ty Hedfan, Brecon Beacons, Wales



one day, I was sitting at home, because we ran it literally from my bedroom to begin with,” Hill recalls. “My wife came back, she said, ‘How’s your day, love?’ And I said, ‘I’m just playing at make-believe here! The phone hasn’t rung.’ We were about to pack it up actually and then we got our first sale and suddenly everything snowballed.”

Hill and Gibberd, who left the Bartlett after one term, have gone on to nose round, and sell, many of the most notable houses built in the last century. These include private residences by John Pawsen, Sir David Adjaye, the house Richard Rogers built for his parents, and a Sixties six-bedroom property in Hertfordshire by the Sydney Opera House designer Jørn Utzon. The Modern House has also created a market for apartments and houses that were unloved, or viewed as eyesores, when they started in 2005. They won’t be to everyone’s taste, but brutalist blocks such as the Alexandra and Ainsworth estate, a Seventies social housing scheme built in north London by architect Neave

Brown, now regularly feature on The Modern House’s books and have lines round the block on viewing days.

“Those flats are absolutely hoovered up now by design-conscious first-time buyers because they recognise you just get more space and it’s more useable space,” says Gibberd. “It’s not like a Victorian conversion where everything’s carved up and it’s got staircases everywhere and thin walls and you can hear everyone else. One of the achievements I’m proudest of with The Modern House is we have genuinely created a platform and a market for these places that wasn’t there before. As a result, their value has risen.”

The Modern House has also been at the forefront of an unlikely phenomenon: people look at their website for recreation, even when they have no active interest in finding a place to live. “Property porn” was added to the dictionary in 2005. “The word porn means you probably feel a bit bad about doing it, you feel a bit guilty about it,” says Hill. “But it’s

really about aspiration, isn’t it? Looking at things and thinking, ‘Oooh.’”

This could, of course, lead to the charge that The Modern House is likely to attract a disproportionate number of time-wasters. Hill, though, disagrees. “Yes, there’s loads of people looking at our site and they’ve got no intention of buying or selling,” he says. “But they know someone who does. And when we do all our research we sell so many places to people who say, ‘A friend said I had to look at this place they’d seen through The Modern House.’ So we’ve got a whole army of promoters out there.”

Perhaps the greatest satisfaction Hill and Gibberd have, though, is that in their small corner of the market, they are rehabilitating the tarnished image of estate agents. The Modern House carefully tracks its Net Promoter Score: this is a customer-loyalty metric that rates companies between +100 (everybody loves you) and -100 (Ryanair); a mark of excellence is felt to be anything over 50. The Modern House currently has a NPS of 98. →

Neave Brown’s Ainsworth Estate, Rowley Way, London NW8

‘Those flats are absolutely hoovered up by design-conscious first-time buyers’

"I remember when we first spoke to clients they'd be talking about things like exchange of contracts," says Hill, smiling. "So I'd look up 'exchange of contracts': what does that mean? But the beauty of it was we had no entrenched wisdom. We could literally start afresh. Being an estate agent was so unglamorous, and there was such negativity towards them, and I think that's one of the reasons we managed to do a land grab in this space. The bar was set pretty low for us really."

THE MODERN HOUSE office in Canonbury, north London, doesn't receive many visitors, but it is, as you would expect, restrained, refined and painted predominantly white. The back wall has floor-to-ceiling shelves, and the books and magazines are ordered by colour. Obvious thought has gone into the floral display on the table in the waiting area. There's not much in the way furniture — Gibberd and Hill's recent book about their favourite modernist buildings is

called *Ornament is Crime* — and the desks and meeting table have been designed for them by Louis Schulz of Assemble, the Turner Prize-winning architectural collective. None of the employees wears a suit and you feel such a trope of estate agency could be a sackable offence.

I ask Rosie Falconer, the sales manager, whether Hill and Gibberd have a similar approach. "Sooo different," she replies. "Matt's the aesthetic driver of the company, while Albert has a brilliant, abstract way of thinking. If it was just him in charge, the website would be bright orange and pink or something. But really, I can't imagine one without the other."

Before The Modern House, Falconer, an English and politics graduate, worked in journalism and advertising. This classifies as a pretty typical background in the company: only one of 16 members of staff had any experience of estate agency before. One appraiser used to manage comedians; many of the others studied or worked in art.

All have come through three interviews and a psychometric test to land a job. Hill

and Gibberd want to bypass the "game face" people bring to these situations and discover if an applicant has the key qualities they look for, especially empathy. "We realised we couldn't hire estate agents, because they have been so ingrained to just sell, sell, sell, sell," says Hill. "And we couldn't hire people from architecture and design because they were used to hiding behind a computer and spending a day tweaking one little thing. You need clients to want to deal with you and who like you."

The other major change in The Modern House model was how they paid employees. Most estate agents operate on straight commission: if you make the sale, you get the bonus. Hill and Gibberd decided early on they would pool the commission and share it between the entire sales team. "So none of the staff are fighting over themselves for deals," says Hill, "which is just crazy."

In an effort to streamline every element of their offering, Hill has gone deep into the latest thinking on disruptive innovation. He is particularly taken with the Growth Mindset theory from Carol Dweck, a professor at

Below and right: artist Dinos Chapman's 7,500sq ft former home in Harrietsham, Kent

'The beauty was we had no entrenched wisdom. "Exchange of contracts." What does that mean? We could start afresh'



Stanford University, which suggests that intelligence and skills can be cultivated through effort and hard work. He's also an acolyte of British cycling coach Sir Dave Brailsford's marginal-gains philosophy. "I think Albert would like us to be the Team Sky of estate agents," says Falconer.


This summer, The Modern House was approached to sell the house that belonged to Bernat Klein, a textile designer who worked with Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Dior. The Bauhaus-influenced single-storey house, designed by the influential mid-century architect Peter Womersley in 1957, overlooks the Scottish Borders, 35 miles south of Edinburgh. The surveyor gave a "generous" estimate of £500,000; The Modern House valued it at £795,000. In the event, there was something of a frenzy, of the kind that Hill says happens around once a year: interested buyers flew in from Switzerland and New York to view the Klein House, a bidding war ensued and it

went for "considerably in excess" of the asking price.

"You can't control the weather on a viewing day, but there are certain things you can control," says Hill, sounding like a true Brailsford disciple. "So, for instance, if we have a property out in somewhere where you know that people haven't ventured into before, they are probably making a day trip; let's say it's in the Scottish Borders or in Dorset or somewhere like that. They won't know the area, so you've got to make sure they go to the right pub for lunch. If they say: 'I love the house, let's go and talk about it over lunch...' and they go to an absolute dive, they'll go, 'Ooh, I don't like it round here.' But if they have the best pub lunch they've ever had, they'll say, 'Oh yeah, hang on a minute, this is good.'"

It will take more than a very special pub lunch to sell Eglon House, but Hill and Gibberd are confident they can find a buyer. Whatever happens, it's already clear that The Modern House is starting to influence the arcane world of estate

agents. Hill says that he hears more and more of their competitors are beginning to see the value in a shared commission pool. Meanwhile, the idea of being online-only — a curiosity back in 2005 — will be the model going forward as they attempt to streamline operations in the post-Brexit climate. Perhaps they'll even realise that the hard sell isn't always the most effective way to close a deal.

"I was talking to a client the other day," says Gibberd, "she's a well-known musician and she said, 'I love everything about what you do. I want to sell my house through you guys and I want another one through you and then I want to sell it through you. And I want to do that ad infinitum, because I don't want to have to deal with a high-street agency.' We're adding value because people have bought into the brand and the people who've bought into the brand, when it comes time for them to buy, they'll trust our judgment. They will come to us and say, 'What have you got?'" 



The journey is the destination

Born in Colombia, raised in Africa, schooled in Belgium and based in France, fashion nomad Haider Ackermann has found a new home as the creative director of Berluti

By John von Sothen
Photographs by Stefano Galuzzi

I CAN'T REMEMBER WHY, but Haider Ackermann and I are talking horses. He's a big fan of riding, which is odd considering he's been on a horse only once. "I was in Colombia recently, and they had this beautiful stallion," the 46-year-old designer tells me as we sit down at the Berluti offices in Paris one warm summer afternoon. "I'd never ridden, so when I got on, he and I just turned and took off. We rode into the jungle, me just hanging on. It was near an area controlled by Farc [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia], so when I signed the insurance waiver before, they said, 'Don't go there!' Of course, the horse and I went there."

This moment sort of sums up Haider Ackermann. He's new to this. He's a bit unpredictable. And right now he's saddled up for an exhilarating, and potentially risky, ride.

In September 2016, Berluti CEO Antoine Arnault (part of the family behind French luxury titan LVMH) hired Ackermann as its creative director. It's the

latest move in a decades-long strategy to transform the 122-year-old French shoemaker into a byword for luxury menswear. The transformation dates back to LVMH's acquisition of the company in 1993, followed by Arnault's hiring of designer Alessandro Sartori in 2011 and the expansion into ready-to-wear in 2012. Over the past five years, Berluti has increased annual sales by more than £130m, but though the gap is shrinking, the company has yet to turn a profit. Ackermann's ascent could mark a turning point for the fashion house, as the designer injects the traditionally elegant Berluti man with some modern-day swagger.

Ackermann's journey has had its share of twists and turns. Born in Bogotá, he had a barnstorming childhood that saw stints in Nigeria, Algeria, Iran, Chad and the Netherlands as his family followed its cartographer patriarch. It was during these formative years that the future designer mapped trends and traced the styles that serve as the inspiration for his "modern →



Haider Ackermann
photographed in Paris, 2017



Karl Lagerfeld once cited Ackermann as his heir apparent, and he boasts a devoted following including Usher and Kanye West

Above:

Green wool-cashmere coat, £5,700; khaki cotton top, £730; white cotton T-shirt, £200; black wool trousers, £550, all by Berluti



nomad" aesthetic. A huge daydreamer as a kid, Ackermann says even his parents didn't think he would amount to much. "But in my mind, things were clear. I knew there was a road I had to take." At 17, he left home for Amsterdam and ended up studying fashion design at Antwerp's Royal Academy of Fine Arts (the old stomping grounds of Martin Margiela and Dries Van Noten). He interned at John Galiano before starting his own label, which he sells in chic concept stores like Colette in Paris and 10 Corso Como in Milan.

As you might guess from his CV, there is a worldly romance about the guy. He speaks softly, and behind the swarthy moustache and John Lennon spectacles you sense a modern-day pirate sitting on a treasure trove of ideas. A lot of those ideas are solid gold, but he can appreciate gilt and gimcrack, too. There's something to be learned from ostentation, especially in our Trumpian Mar-a-Lago present.

"I think it's really interesting to have all this vulgarity today," he says. "Everything provokes something, right? Perhaps all this ugliness is good! Perhaps everything that's happening right now will help people concentrate on what beauty really is and to take that road more than ever."

Not what you'd expect to hear from the man heading up an historically restrained house. Italian shoemaker Alessandro Berluti founded the company in Paris in 1895 based on the strength of a dramatically simple lace-up: crafted from a single piece of seamless leather, so minimally designed that it resembles a last more than a shoe. Since then, the label has claimed a distinguished list of highbrow customers, from Marcel Proust and the Duke of Windsor to JFK and Aristotle Onassis. But Ackermann was hired to be a fashion bomb-thrower, and he's bringing a new kind of customer with him.

"We haven't found the Berluti guy yet," he says. "We're still searching. We had the codes, we absorbed them, and then we threw them away." Ackermann suggests the past Berluti man was too serious for his own good. It was time to loosen up.

"Look, the world outside is tough and that dude is working hard. He's constantly on the road," Ackermann says. "He's a modern nomad. So he needs to have a very essential wardrobe. That's the exercise for me — to make a wardrobe that's very comfortable, easy."

Taking over in the wake of Sartori, who successfully took Berluti from leather goods to ready-to-wear, was a tall order. So was focusing solely on menswear, an arena in which Ackermann admits he's had limited experience. "I was coming from the women's world and never considered myself to be a men's designer in the first place," he says. (He's being modest: his personal brand has included menswear since 2010.) "When I got the call from Berluti, I was like, 'Seriously?'"

Again, he undersells himself. Ackermann may not be a household name, but thanks to his eponymous line, he has plenty of fashion street cred. The Godfather himself, Karl Lagerfeld, once cited Ackermann as his heir apparent at Chanel, and he boasts a devoted following of stars including Usher, Kanye West and gender-bending actress Tilda Swinton, who counts the

designer as a friend. In typical Swintonian prose, she calls his clothes: "supersonic medieval, sophisticated beyond pure simplicity, fluid beyond time or place. His clothes make you walk a grounded walk, face the wind, move comfortably. Eternal, deathless chic."

West, for his part, alerted a generation of style-conscious hypebeasts to the designer by wearing his pieces, which were in turn dissected on websites like Complex and copied by fast-fashion retailers such as H&M. There was a period when West seemed to live in Ackermann's high-end, low-slung sweatpants, inspired by the designer's childhood in the desert.

"I was six or seven and we were living in Algeria," he says, "and you had these pants called 'Zouave', which were low-cut trousers. I always wanted to have them but for some reason my parents said no. It always stuck in my mind, and the moment I started to do the men's collection, there was this 'now I can have it!' feeling."

At his autumn show in Paris earlier this year, his first for Berluti, those same low-hanging sweatpants were there again, just one part of a collection that did have some kid-in-a-sweetshop abandon. The colours (bottle green, chocolate and dove grey) were rich, and the fabrics (silk, suede and velvet) were even richer. But for all that sumptuous appeal, the clothes were easy to wear, as appropriate at the airport as they would be at a dinner party, with influences drawn from everywhere (and therefore nowhere).

That's by design, Ackermann says. "All of us are nomadic nowadays. Look at how many people are travelling. They're flying nonstop. They're in cabs. And they're travelling with their minds thanks to Instagram," he says. "The world's turning out to be one big rolling thing. There is no one place."

Because of this rootlessness, Ackermann claims he's most "at home" when travelling. "When you're very far away from home, you're actually closer to home," he says. "You have the luxury to sit down and analyse things. It gives you peace of mind. It's not me in India, inspired by a woman wearing a sari. It's me in India struck by the calmness of being in a foreign place that allows my thoughts to come inside."

When at home in Paris, Ackermann finds his inspiration at 3am, taking long walks through the city. "When I'm alone in the street, that's when I have the most fantastic dreams about my work," he says. "Nights are the most beautiful moments for this. These are the stolen moments we eventually sell."

However dreamy Ackermann may seem, he's not interested in creating clothes for some far-flung fantasy; he's firmly rooted in the here and now. "We have a business to run here," he says. "The Berluti guy's down here with us. He's totally in reality." And he knows that reality can get messy. "I think on a personal level, you have to let failure and danger in," he says. Get on the horse. Go wherever it takes you. "There's always a crack somewhere you have to embrace, because that's where the light shines through. Leonard Cohen said [something like] that. That's why the search for beauty and ugliness has always intrigued me," he says. "That's the interesting part." **E**

Left:

Brown suede jacket, £3,200; black cashmere sweatshirt, £1,420; blue velvet trousers, £870; blue leather belt, £530; brown wool socks, £40; brown crocodile leather boots, £POA, all by Berluti
Near left: grey cashmere-wool coat, £5,700; grey wool flannel trousers, £550, both by Berluti




Stainless steel 40mm
Dive on green rubber
strap, £730, by Gucci

Stainless steel 44mm
Aquatimer Chronograph
on black rubber strap,
£5,750, by IWC

Stainless steel 40mm
Tribute to Fifty Fathoms
Mil-Spec on black sail
cloth strap, £10,310,
by Blancpain

Decision time

Which of these watches is for you?



Stainless steel 44mm
Tambour Regatta Navy
on black rubber strap,
£3,385, by Louis Vuitton

Titanium 47mm
Luminor 1950 on black
rubber bracelet,
£9,300, by Panerai

Stainless steel 45mm
Professional Diver on
black rubber strap,
£495, by Victorinox



Ceramic 39mm True
Thinline Green on
ceramic bracelet,
£1,585, by Rado

White gold 42.2mm
Aquanaut on blue
composite strap,
£29,520, by
Patek Philippe

Stainless steel
36.3mm Ahoi Neomatik
Signalrot on light grey
textile strap, £3,070,
by Nomos Glashütte

Stainless steel 42mm
Royal Oak Offshore
Diver on yellow rubber
strap, £16,800, by
Audemars Piguet

Stainless steel 41mm
Heritage Black Bay
on black fabric strap,
£2,630, by Tudor
at Harrods

White gold 38mm
Altiplano 60th
Anniversary Edition on
blue alligator leather
strap, £16,700, by Piaget



Platinum 38.5mm Lange
1 Moon Phase on brown
leather strap, £44,700,
by A Lange & Söhne

Stainless steel 38mm
Grand Seiko SBGW253
on black crocodile
leather strap, £5,500,
by Seiko

18k rose gold 40.5mm
Slim d'Hermès L'Heure
Impatiente on brown
alligator leather strap,
£28,100, by Hermès



18k Everose gold 39mm
Cellini Dual Time on
brown crocodile leather
strap, £14,250, by Rolex

18k white gold 40mm
Classique Novelty
on black alligator
leather strap, £16,200,
by Breguet

Stainless steel 42
x 25mm East West on
black alligator leather
strap, £3,525, by
Tiffany & Co

18k pink gold 33.7
x 25.5mm Tank Louis
Cartier on brown
alligator leather strap,
£11,100, by Cartier

Satin-polished steel
41mm BRV2-24 Black
Steel chronograph on
black calf skin strap,
£3,350, by Bell and Ross

Stainless steel 43mm
ALT1-P2 Cream
chronograph on brown
calf skin strap, £3,895,
by Bremont



Stainless steel 40mm
Big Crown 1917 on
brown leather strap,
£1,950, by Oris

Stainless steel 41mm
Avigation BigEye
chronograph on brown
calf leather strap,
£1,940, by Longines

Titanium 43mm
Chronospace Evo B60
on black leather strap,
£3,230, by Breitling






Stainless steel
44.25mm Speedmaster
Racing Co-Axial
Automatic Chronograph
on black rubber strap,
£6,240, by Omega

Stainless steel 47mm
Runwell Chronograph
on brown leather strap,
£675, by Shinola

18k rose gold 46mm
Mille Miglia Classic
XL 90th Anniversary
chronograph on
brown calf skin strap,
£32,110, by Chopard

Black DLC-treated
steel 41.5mm Ooto
Maserati GranSport
Mono-Retro on black
calf leather strap,
£12,480, by Bulgari



DLC-coated stainless steel TimeWalker Chronograph UTC on black rubber strap, £4,290, by Montblanc

Graph TPT 44.5mm x 49.65mm RM 50-03 Tourbillon Split Seconds Chronograph Ultralight McLaren F1 on red rubber strap, £964,000, by Richard Mille

Set Design: Bryony Edwards
Retouching: Stiletto.studio
See Stockists page for details



Jonathan Levine, founder and CEO of headphone manufacturers Master & Dynamic in its New York office, September 2017. Right: headphones from the brand's new Greene Street range

How to show off your musical connoisseurship in the age of Spotify? Headphones, believe it or not. What to spend your money on now that music is free? Luxury headphones, of course. In New York, premium audio company Master & Dynamic is making itself heard above the din



Photographs by
Jeremy Liebman

Wired

By Johnny Davis

ON THE SEVENTH FLOOR of an office block in midtown Manhattan a meeting is taking place. Sales and marketing co-ordinator Sarah Dominguez is showing half a dozen of her colleagues photographs for a new advertising campaign, one that will take their brand through the important holiday season, from Black Friday to Christmas Day.

"It's Bigfoot. It's Sasquatch," suggests someone.

"It's a modern-day... what's that *Sesame Street* character?" asks Jonathan Levine, the founder and CEO.

"The Grouch," says someone.

The photographs are of a six-foot man in a ghillie suit, emerging from a subway station and wandering around SoHo, the shopping district known for its designer boutiques and fancy chain stores. The camouflage character has been chosen to tie-in with a new product line, camo-patterned headphones. We are in the offices of Master & Dynamic, the high-end audio brand, who in three years have broken into a hugely competitive market to become one of the most distinctive and talked-about names in designer tech. It is the first time they have launched an ad campaign to speak of, one that will go under the slogan "A World Apart". The new headphone collection is called Greene Street: this afternoon people employed on SoHo's actual Greene Street will be photographed wearing them.

"There's some really cool brands there," someone says. "Stone Island, Acne..."

"Some of our competitors are on Greene Street, like Devialet and Sonos."

"Beats used to be," Levine says.

Talk turns to a pop-up shop, to be designed by Green Fingers ("This is like a triple-entendre"), the Tokyo creative company that specialises in designing concrete-and-foliage environments for trendy fashion retailers, including Mr Porter and Adidas.

"I'll share with the team the rough social calendar," says Dominguez. "But we're really trying to push that super-visual element. The bigger umbrella of not just having an Instagram calendar, but Twitter, blog, Facebook and emails. So: all together. Hopefully, November will be a good roll-out."

Apart from Levine and his co-founder Vicki Gross, the meeting is comprised of casually dressed millennials, and the mood is upbeat and jovial on both sides.

"Anyone else want to compliment me?" asks Levine, after someone thanks him for setting up some brainstorming with retailers.

"Well done for attending a meeting?" suggests Gross.

"And actually paying attention?" chuckles Levine, who has been fiddling with his laptop throughout. "Sort of."

THE STORY GOES THAT LEVINE, a former Wall Street commodities trader turned successful entrepreneur, whose previous businesses include making a plug to convert DC to AC current from car cigarette lighters to charge phones, power tools and battery-operated LED lighting, turned to headphones after building a recording studio in his office so he could spend more time with his music-mad son Robert, following a divorce. Robert had handed down his Beats by Dr Dre headphones to his younger brother Justin, finding them both sonically underwhelming and too ubiquitous for DJing. (Justin subsequently gave them away.) Levine, who studied architecture and has an eye for luxury and design — he favours Common Projects trainers, Ermenegildo Zegna shirts and watches by A Lange & Söhne, Rolex and IWC, and keeps a Twenties coin-operated football table in his office — chanced across a pair of WWII aviator headphones in a Washington DC museum. Because they were made from leather and metal, they had aged well and, to Levine at least, looked modern, even timeless.

Melt down most sets of headphones and you're left with a tennis ball-sized lump of plastic. Nothing very luxurious about that. But what if you went the other way, Levine wondered, and constructed them from lambskin and anodised aluminium? Could this be a gap in the market? In 2013, Levine asked his fledgling team to forget they were starting a headphone company: if they were a camera, watch, luggage, car, coffee or fragrance brand, who would they be? (They settled on Leica, IWC, Rimowa, Aston Martin/Tesla, Nespresso and Frédéric Malle.)

Master & Dynamic was launched in May 2014 with an initial product line comprising two headphones and one earphone. The flagship model MH40s were distinctive: they looked like WWII aviator headphones. Marketed to the creative community as "sound tools for creative minds", and sold into fashion boutiques like Opening Ceremony in New York and Colette in Paris, they retailed for £370 and received universally positive reviews from the audio and tech press. Where the market was split into performance products for at-home audiophiles and fashion-led lines for a younger, out-and-about crowd, Master & Dynamic hit a note right in the middle. They satisfied geek and chic. The brand has subsequently collaborated with Leica,

Aston Martin, Bamford Watch Department and Ermenegildo Zegna. In 2017, it launched a wireless speaker for the home, co-designed with the British architect Sir David Adjaye. Made of proprietary concrete composite and cast in a slab-like "new geometric form", it forewent the traditional box-shape of almost every other speaker, weighed 16kg and retailed for £1,600.

"I didn't enter this business with a golden Rolodex of connections in the industry," the boyish, likeable Levine tells me. "I'm not the former CEO of another audio brand. I'm not from the music industry, like other famous, or well-known, entrepreneurs. And I'm not the former CEO, founder or head of marketing for another luxury brand. My only connection to luxury is being a luxury consumer. But somehow at this age, I've been able to synthesise it all together, and connect the dots. Luckily, I have a lot of energy. That's important for any entrepreneur. And I enjoy meeting people."

This is true. During our time together Levine mentions, in passing, friendships with the president of Rolex North America, the boss of Moncler, the head of British design studio Andrew Winch and the CEO of Baccarat Crystal. One morning I arrive to find him on the phone to the marketing director of Feadship, Dutch makers of custom superyachts. Not long ago he found himself in Abbey Road Studios, watching Frank Ocean. Back in New York he chanced upon Paul McCartney promoting something in a department store. Levine introduced himself and showed him the photo he'd taken in The Beatles' famous recording studio. He'd welcome the opportunity to make some headphones for McCartney. Macca thanked him but being vegan, lambskin wasn't for him. Levine duly went off and partnered with Alcantara, producers of the suede-like synthetic material found in Formula One cars, to make an animal-friendly version now in Master & Dynamic's range.

In addition, Levine is a fixture at events such as Salone del Mobile Milano, the Milan furniture fair. When we meet he has just got back from the Monaco Yacht Show, not, as one member of staff explains, because he wants to buy a yacht but because this is where the high-net worth people hang out and because he wants to get a feel for where he should be and whom he should talk to.

"He has big dreams and his enthusiasm is infectious," a former employee who worked on the brand's launch tells me. "He's a real people person and he's got a real knack for connecting with a broad spectrum of characters."

That includes his customers. Anyone

Audio development is constantly underway in 'The Lab' facility inside the Master & Dynamic HQ



M&D satisfies geek and chic. The brand has collaborated with Leica, Aston Martin and Ermenegildo Zegna

emailing the standard “info@” or “support@” addresses with a query has a chance of getting an answer from Levine himself.

“They love the fact the CEO is emailing them on a Saturday,” he beams. “When I see somebody, could be in an airport, on a plane, in a subway, wearing my headphones, I’ll go up to them, and I’ll say, ‘Excuse me’ — obviously they’ll have to take their headphones off — ‘Where did you get the headphones?’ They’ll say, ‘What?’ I’ll ask again, ‘What headphones are they?’ Then they’ll reply, ‘Oh, Master & Dynamic, I got them blah blah blah.’ I’ll ask, ‘Are they any good?’ They’ll reply, ‘Yeah, they’re amazing, the best headphones I’ve ever had.’”

“Then I’ll ask, ‘Excuse me: what do you do for a living?’ I would say 95-plus per cent turn out to be in advertising, design, architecture, fashion. This is very interesting. If you think about it, we’ve created this company based on the creative community and engaged with them, and it seems to be working.”

When does he say, “It’s my company”?

“I say, ‘Do you know what I do?’ They say ‘No’, and I give them my card. And they go, ‘Ahhh!’”

DRESSED IN A BLACK LEATHER TRACKSUIT and blue tinted sunglasses and accompanied by young women in pastel Lycra bodysuits, Cliff Richard roller-skates through Milton Keynes’ shopping centre. It is 1981 and you are watching the video for “Wired for Sound”. Strapped to Richard’s waist is the newly released Sony Walkman TPS-L2, a 1lb portable cassette player with chunky buttons and a leather case. Around his neck are the accompanying headphones, lightweight foam-covered earpieces connected by a thin metal band. Having been stung by the failure of its Betamax video recorder, the early Eighties found Sony in need of a hit. It gambled on a personal cassette player with no external speaker. To cover their backs they included two headphone jacks, lest the idea of listening to music alone and in public was deemed too weird or antisocial. The combination of portability (it ran on two AA batteries) and privacy (it coincided with the aerobics craze, and was attributed to a 30 per cent rise in people exercising by walking) turned it into the accessory of the decade.

Predicted to sell 5,000 units a month, it cleared 50,000 in its first two and by 1983 cassettes outsold vinyl for the first time. Today an original Walkman is displayed in London’s Design Museum. Sony had done something incredible: we could now take ownership of →

our own audio space. Or as Michael Bull, professor of personal sound studies at the University of Sussex, later put it: "Privatised and mediated sound reproduction enables consumers to create intimate, manageable and aestheticised spaces in which they are increasingly able, and desire, to live."

Sony had also created the first wearable, long before fitness trackers. But it didn't come up with the headphone. For that we have to thank Thomas Edison, who in 1877 concluded five days and nights working away on his phonograph by listening on his own original set. By 1881, the Théâtrophone, which used telephone lines to pipe music directly into people's homes, launched in Paris, to be followed by London-based company Electrophone, who introduced headsets that allowed well-off listeners to hear performances from the Royal Opera House via a switchboard.

The modern headphone was invented in 1910 by Utah's Nathaniel Baldwin, who wanted to amplify the sound of sermons at his local Mormon temple. Baldwin's headphones contained a mile-long coil of copper wiring in each earcup, and is now the basis for the larger cup shape we recognise and know today. His design took off when the US Navy used them in WWI. By the Sixties, the brand Koss developed both noise-blocking cups for pilots and the first pop star co-brand: Beatlephones with stickers of the Fab Four on each enamel cup.

The birth of today's headphone culture comes, of course, from Apple. The iPod arrived in 2001, launching with the promise of "1,000 songs in your pocket" and its distinctive dancing silhouettes ad campaign. The star of these adverts wasn't the consumer or the device, something Steve Jobs initially hated, it was the high-contrast white earbuds and cable, soon to be blamed for a rise in muggings and — quaint now, given smartphones — hysteria over "iPod zombies". For the first time since the Walkman, headphones became a fashion statement. In 2013, Roksanda Ilincic and her backstage team wore Sennheiser's Momentum On-Ear headphones during the unveiling of the designer's SS '14 collection

at London Fashion Week. A year later, Karl Lagerfeld launched Chanel's Monster headphones at Paris Fashion Week (later sold in stores for £4,170), and in 2015 Dolce & Gabbana partnered with Friends to show off headphones festooned with Swarovski crystals at Milan Fashion Week.

As music became free, as our smartphones became the conduit for Spotify, YouTube, Netflix, podcasts and video games, as the amount we were willing to pay for entertainment evaporated, the amount we were willing to spend on the hardware to play it through increased. HMV moved music to the back of its stores and headphones to the front. Today, practically everyone in the UK owns some sort of personal audio player. They all need headphones. The

concern in 2001 over being mugged for your £399 5GB iPod now seem laughable. Today, that's a reasonable entry-point for any number of headphone brands — Bose, Bowers & Wilkins, B&O Play, Sennheiser. The market is predicted to be worth over £14bn by 2022.

"Audiophiles have always been willing to spend a huge amount of money on headphones," says Toby Jarvis, client insight manager at retail analysts GfK. "But with advances in technology like noise-cancelling, which is good for commuters, and wireless, which now accounts for half the market, there are tangible benefits. A lot of innovation is for innovation's sake. This improves people's day-to-day. Bose have launched a version of their QuietComfort 35 II with Google Assistant, there's a lot



Moments of note



Sony Walkman, 1979

"The progress of sound continues, but what about mankind?" asked an Eighties' advert, claiming the Walkman as a human-tech hybrid, and therefore the first wearable.



Apple iPod, 1991

According to Walter Isaacson's biog, Steve Jobs hated the now-iconic silhouette adverts, dismissing one as a "Pottery Barn commercial". The high-contrast white earphones helped shift 100m iPods.



'The first wearable': an advertisement from 1980 for the new Sony TPS L2 cassette-playing Walkman with MDR-3L2 headphones

construction, poor value for money and a tuning that pushes bass at the expense of everything else are commonplace.

"JUST AS WE WERE GETTING READY to launch, the rumours of Apple buying Beats came out," Levine says. "I can't tell you how many people I had reaching out to me saying 'Are you OK? This can't be good for you.' For 24 hours I was a bit unnerved because it was big, big news. But then I realised Beats was not our core competition. It was really the other companies.

"I literally think the best thing that happened to us was Apple buying Beats. Anytime there are one or two brands that dominate a category, that's easier to compete in, rather than everything being flat. If 20 people have five per cent of the market, it's hard to differentiate and figure out how you're going to grab a few percentages. But when one or two players have 50 or 60, or whatever the numbers are, I think it's easier. If it wasn't for Beats I wouldn't have entered the category, because it shows you can compete with something new. Pretty much every company that tried to become 'the next Beats' by competing with Beats doesn't exist because people say, 'Why would I want that copy of Beats, when I can go and buy the real Beats and feel good about it?'"

Still, I suggest, it can't have been the easiest market to go into. It's not like the world was crying out for another headphone brand.

"It's funny," he says. "Before we launched, friends and family would ask what I was up to. Everybody, even eight months after we launched, said, 'Why would you get into headphones? It's so competitive.' I'd answer I don't know of any category, whether a service or product, that's *not* competitive today. Real estate, restaurants, you name it. And so my premise was: 'Listen, if you have something special, you should compete. If you don't, you should probably do something else.' After a year, I realised nobody had asked me that question. They started to see what we were doing was different."

Master & Dynamic's early promotional material touted their products as the "modern →

of hype around voice tech. Apple's new AirPods have been significant, too. The market is extremely positive."

For this, we must thank Dr Dre. The way he and his business partner, music mogul Jimmy Iovine, saw it, a decade ago the music business faced two problems. Loss of music sales through piracy and loss of music quality through Apple's earbuds. "Apple," Iovine noted, "was selling \$400 iPods with \$1 earbuds. Dre told me, 'Man, it's one thing that people steal my music. It's another thing to destroy the feeling of what I've worked on.'"

Technology, he figured, was the new artist. If Steve Jobs had created a premium white object with all the music in the world on it, he and Dre would make a premium black object

to play it back, and "market this product just like it was Tupac or U2 or Guns N'Roses". Helped by endless music video placements and endorsements from athletes — the entire US basketball team showed up to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing wearing them — Beats by Dr Dre became a status symbol overnight. Over-ear "cans" were no longer the preserve of audiophiles. They were streetwear.

Apple acquired Dre's company three years ago, turning their namesake, as he has hardly shied away from pointing out, into hip-hop's first billionaire. Today, Beats By Dr Dre account for an incredible 70 per cent of the premium (over £100) headphone market. Ironical, since reviews of their products have often been less than premium: complaints of shonky



Beats by Dr Dre, 2008

Over-ear headphones go from recording studio to a multi-billion-pound streetwear business. Tuned to make music sound "more dramatic", not everyone was keen. "We got dumped on by audiophiles from day one," says co-founder Jimmy Iovine.



Master & Dynamic, 2013

Forget about Dre: now the premium (over £100) headphone market explodes, with B&O Play, Bowers & Wilkins and Bose cleaning up. NYC's Master & Dynamic debut "sound tools for creative minds".

thinking caps”, a fairly horrendous phrase, but they were onto something. While others targeted a young, sporty, clubbing crowd, Master & Dynamic went professional. Offices had become more open-plan and informal: headphones are accepted, even necessary, to concentrate. (And that’s if your office is an office, and not a Starbucks.) A professional-looking set of cans you can keep at your desk is a nice thing. There are few more distressing sights in modern life than a grown man wearing a suit and a pair of bright red plastic headphones.

IN THE CORNER OF MASTER & DYNAMIC’S offices is “The Lab”, where it develops new products. One afternoon, Levine sits down for a meeting with Drew Stone Briggs, chief product officer and an early recruit from rivals Bose, and product designer Thomas Wilson. They have a number of projects on the go. But first, conversation turns to a rival’s latest release, reviews of which have been published that morning. They have not been kind.

“Another one for those guys, huh?” says Levine, behind his laptop.

“Two mediocre reviews and one that was, wow, brutal,” says Wilson.

“PCMag was just... yeah,” says Stone Briggs, shaking his head.

“How do you make a small fortune?” says Levine, teeing up the joke with the punchline “start with a large one and invest poorly”.

“Start a headphone company?” teases Stone Briggs.

They whip through the update, presenting mock-ups on a screen. First, some new technology to incorporate into an existing line. The design alterations required are imperceptible to me, but Levine is forensic.

“Black on black might work,” he frowns. “But I feel there’s a lot going on there.”

“Yeah,” agrees Stone Briggs. “It’s messy.”

Next, a modification to the Sir David Adjaye speaker. Its concrete composition might be groundbreaking, but it also exposes its woofer and tweeter — the latter being a 1.5in disc of woven kevlar that some have found too irresistible not to prod. “Even for adults it’s, like, ‘What is that shiny...?’” says Stone Briggs, before presenting some options for a thin titanium guard.

Finally, there is a new product, at the functional prototype stage, which in 2018 will solidify Master & Dynamic’s commitment to wireless. They pass around design options.

“We’re thinking this is quite feminine and unique, and this can be quite masculine and also interesting,” says Drew Briggs. “And this could be, like, *out there*. Maybe a special

one-off for a special customer, or a fashion collaboration.” “It’s cool,” he says. “We’re in uncharted territory right now.”

IN THE MASTER & DYNAMIC OFFICES, PR Christine Doh is known as “the gifting goddess”. Master & Dynamic have never done a celebrity endorsement. They don’t do product placements. You won’t find famous people in their Instagram feed. Instead they rely on what Levine calls “strategic word-of-mouth”. This translates as supplying the right people and events with the right product and believing they’ll do the rest. One musician both Levine and his sons agree on is André 3000 (“I created a playlist with my eldest son and he’s, like, Jay-Z and Kanye, and I’m, like, Van Morrison and Warren Zevon,” Levine says) often photographed out and about with his Master & Dynamic MH40 over-ears. But Levine has forbidden his PR department to make anything of this. It seems a little counterintuitive.

“It does. But people in the luxury world, CEOs of luxury brands, actually say, ‘That’s exactly what you should be doing, that’s actually cooler, that’s the right thing.’ If you look at the feeds of some these brands that we love, Gucci, Moncler, they’ve earned the right to do that. But I cringe to think we’d use that in our marketing. I think it’s better for these people to be seen, and to market ourselves privately. It almost becomes an inside secret. Like, ‘Oh, how did you get those?’”

That’s a long-term strategy.

“And I’m a guy, at 55, thinking long-term,” Levine says. “But if you look at the companies I wanted to compete against early on, these are companies that were started between 1945, Sennheiser, and 1964, Bose. Those brands are still strong and relevant and have a healthy business. So if I can build Master & Dynamic into a brand that is still important in 50 years, that’s what I set out to do. To create a product, that in 50 years, someone would buy on eBay, or their version of eBay, and say ‘Oh my God, look at those things.’ And put them in their office, or their home. As an object of beauty.”

THAT EVENING, LEVINE AND GROSS have arranged to attend a talk at the Museum of Modern Art. It is by Paola Antonelli, curator of an exhibition called *Items: Is Fashion Modern?* which has just opened. They invite me along.

“She’s been good to us, so we should support her,” Levine explains. “They took our speaker in the MoMA gift shop. Do you know how difficult it is to get something in there?”

Have they sold any? A 16kg concrete speaker is a different proposition to a Warhol

pen or a Lichtenstein tea towel, after all.

“Yeah,” Levine grins. “We made the world’s most non-portable, portable speaker.”

After the talk, we walk round the exhibition of 111 designs MoMA deems to have changed fashion. These are listed on a wall-sized display at the entrance: Adidas Superstars, Bucket Hat, Biker Jacket, Little Black Dress, Loafer, Swatch, Tracksuit, and so on.

Gross spots one other: “Headphones.”

We predict which headphones. There, in a case, opposite Hermès’ Birkin bag and Yves Saint Laurent’s Le Smoking tuxedo, is Sony’s original Walkman, plus foam headset.

“They’re beautiful in their simplicity,” Levine marvels. “One day. I mean, all things are possible, right?”

MASTER & DYNAMIC EMPLOYS AROUND 35 PEOPLE (Beats has some 700). It was started with Levine’s money, having never raised a penny of outside capital. Was that scary?

“It’s still scary,” he says. “But I remember going to [business] conferences and seeing a company who were very proud, they had banners that said, ‘We’ve raised \$135m from...’ with five very prominent VC investment companies listed, and their thinking was almost like, ‘If you raise a lot of money from the right people, you’re guaranteed success.’ That’s complete nonsense. Why we love working with brands like Zegna or Leica, and we’re starting to do stuff with the watch industry and aviation, too... it’s great for co-branding, but you also get to learn from these people. How they built their brand, and how they treat it. I think if we’d taken on early investment from VCs it probably would have pushed us in the wrong direction. Because what happens is, you have a grand plan and sometimes that doesn’t go to plan, the market is changing, retail is changing, and then investors say ‘Wait a minute, you’ve got to do *this* now, so that you can grow.’ All of a sudden you have a very different company from what you started with. So being private is absolutely part of our magic.”

Levine’s father died when he was four. He took his role as the eldest son, the male of the house making his own way and supporting his family, seriously. “A hustler all the way,” he smiles. “All legitimate.”

“Every time I go places, there are opportunities I’ve created, just by meeting people. It’s that curiosity, and a bit of scrappiness. We know we have to work harder in this competitive world where we are competing against giants. We have to think and act like underdogs. You have to be out there. And it’s never failed me.”

Levine going over details of a new product range at Master & Dynamic HQ, New York



‘My premise was: “If you have something special you should compete. If you don’t, you should do something else”

THE LAST TIME I SEE LEVINE, he and the team are off on a night out. It is the *Surface* magazine travel awards and Master & Dynamic’s collaboration with Zegna has won in the best headphones category. Before that Levine wants to meet me in the West Village to show me the new Chrome Hearts store. The LA-based brand is noted for its high-end jewellery, rock ‘n’ roll clientele and penchant for rendering household objects in solid silver and diamonds, with suitably adjusted prices. The cavernous 16,000sq ft venue has only just opened: apparently taking five years of development to get to a point where owners Richard and Laurie Stark were happy. Inside is a two-storey gallery space, showroom, shop lounge and chef’s kitchen. Everything for sale is one-of-a-kind, including a 14-seat dining table, 13ft stuffed leather dinosaur with sterling spikes and a 70kg chainmail American flag with pavé diamonds.

Levine introduces me to Stephanie Reynolds, Chrome Hearts’ PR: “The most important person in luxury right now.”

We get given the tour. “The everyday stuff is actually some of our best-sellers,” Reynolds explains. “The pizza cutter, carrot peeler, baseball bat. Richard likes to say he makes everything in the whole wide world, he just hasn’t been around long enough yet.”

I pick up a toilet plunger. It comes in two options: \$1,300 without diamonds, \$10,000 with. Then there are the plastic ketchup bottles, red and yellow, familiar to anyone’s who’s ever been in a diner. Except these ones have pavé lids and cost \$40,000.

Before he leaves Levine writes a note to Lynne Sable, Chrome Hearts’ sales director, leaving her two sets of headphones from an upcoming but unreleased Master & Dynamic collaboration with a tattoo artist famous for his Hollywood clientele.

“Just something to try and get me closer to my Chrome Hearts collaboration,” he tells Reynolds. “She’s so tough! We’re a very low brand. It’s, like, ‘Get in line...”

Back outside Levine is overcome with admiration. “It’s fucking nuts,” he says. “Seriously. I feel good about the stuff I’ve created, then I go in there and I’m, like, ‘I’ve got to up my game.’ Fantastic.”

The Starks started their business in 1988.

“OK,” he says, clapping his hands. “I’ve got 20-something more years to get this right.”

In an Uber on the way to the *Surface* party word comes that the awards will be presented by Solange Knowles. Levine jumps on his phone. “Can we get a pair of headphones sent over for her?” **E**

Interview by Alex Bilmes

Portrait by Jooney Woodward



What I've Learned

SIR PAUL SMITH

Fashion designer, 71

MY DAD WAS A CREDIT DRAPER, which doesn't exist anymore. He used to sell to people in their homes, things like sheets, bed linen, curtains, some clothes. It started straight after the war. He was an insurance man, door to door, and then he had the idea of maybe selling some clothes, or pillows, or anything. He had what he called "a round". That meant that they were a group of people, and they paid him so much a week.

I WANTED TO BE A RACING CYCLIST. My dad bought me a racing bike, and I rode competitively from the age of 12 until I was 18. One day, looking extremely gorgeous on the bike, wearing some Buddy Holly glasses with a big, thick rim, I crashed into a car, because I couldn't see where I was going. I ended up in hospital for three months.

THE BRITS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SO BRILLIANT at self-expression through non-violence. The punks, the New Romantics, the goths, the Mods, hippies. In France, they were burning cars. In England it was more like, "How would these curtains look on me?"

THE FIRST LITTLE COLLECTION, I think it was two shirts, two pairs of pants, two jackets, two pieces of knitwear, and one suit.

WHEN I STARTED, the whole idea about being a designer is that you have an idea in your head and your heart, and you hoped somebody liked it. Now it's all about, "Prada are doing this, Gucci are doing that." And everyone's nervous. And it used to be just about: this is what I do.

I GOT MY FIRST CAMERA WHEN I WAS 11. You were taught to look and see. Now you use a phone: delete, delete, delete, delete. But back then, when you look through a viewfinder, you have to get your picture lined up really well because you only have 24 exposures, or 36, and they're very costly to print. So it's very much about looking and learning to see.

I REMEMBER WALKING DOWN BYARD LANE in Nottingham one day and a lovely old ex-soldier quite rightly said, "You look like a bloody girl!" I said, "You're right, sir. Sorry." And tottered off in my high heels.

A LOT OF FASHION IS ABOUT HAVING A CARRIER BAG that has a particular branding on it, something that says "I am rich", or "I am fashionable", or "I am part of this club". In my opinion, that's linked to insecurity.

IT'S A DIFFICULT WORD, isn't it, "style"?

'In France,
they were
burning cars.
In England it
was more like,
"How would
these curtains
look on me?"'

ONE NIGHT AT A PARTY I MET THIS GIRL who was very nice. She turned out to be a married lady with two dogs, two cats and two kids, which was slightly confusing, and I was 21 and she was 27, and she lived in London and I lived in Nottingham with my mum and dad. But we fell in love. Suddenly I had an instant family. And that was Pauline. It was 1967. I didn't marry her until the year 2000. I wasn't sure. It takes a while, you know?

IT'S ABOUT LEARNING TO GIVE AND TAKE, learning to be interested, and interesting, learning to not just talk about yourself, listening to how their day has been, as well as your day. It's just keeping your feet on the ground. Do the washing up. Wipe the tops. I love that. It's so therapeutic.

DON'T YOU THINK WE OVERUSE WORDS, IN COMMERCE, NOW? You know: Limited edition. Vintage. Luxury. Loo rolls have "luxury" written on them... As long as it's not "vintage", I suppose.

THERE'S A MAN CALLED CARLO SCARPA, AN ARCHITECT FROM ITALY. He passed away many years ago. One of his specialties was modernising an existing old building. He'd take a beautiful old villa in Treviso, say, and put a bronze and steel shelf onto a wall that's been there for 200 years. I like that a lot.

I DON'T LIKE CONFRONTATION CLOTHES. I like clothes you feel comfortable in.

THE FIRST TIME I WENT TO JAPAN, IN 1982, I was on a train going from Kanazawa to Osaka and I walked the whole length of the train, and there was no other foreign person on

there at all. Every time the electric doors opened, all the kids were pointing. I'm quite tall. You'd stay in a hotel where your feet are hanging off the end of the bed, because in those days they didn't have beds for western people. Washing your hands was difficult because the basin was very low. Other things were low, as well. Now I've got my own office there. I think it's 200-and-something shops. I've never counted, but it's a lot.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PERSON THAT'S BEEN SENDING ME THINGS for over 40 years? A completely unknown person. A chair, a robot, a ski, a stepladder. But they never arrive in a box. They come with the address written directly onto them, and the stamps stuck on. The postman arrived the other day with an Austrian cowbell around his neck.

I'VE GOT A MINI. That's fine for me. There's no private jet. Where would I park it?

WHERE A LOT OF DESIGNERS GET IT HORRIBLY WRONG is they do things just to get attention from the press. That does a huge disservice to our industry, and it doesn't do any good for themselves most of the time, because people just think it's silly.


I COULD GO ROUND THE WORLD 50 TIMES on air miles. My secretary told me the other day.

ONE OF THE JOYS OF A BESPOKE SUIT is the little gathers you get on the shoulders, which is such a nice symbol that it's made by hand. It will be imperfection because one thread will be pulled slightly harder than the other, and that's joyful. It's lovely.

PAULINE DOESN'T HAVE A PHONE, and we don't have an answer machine, and we have no computer. I'm not saying it's a good thing or a bad thing, we just don't.

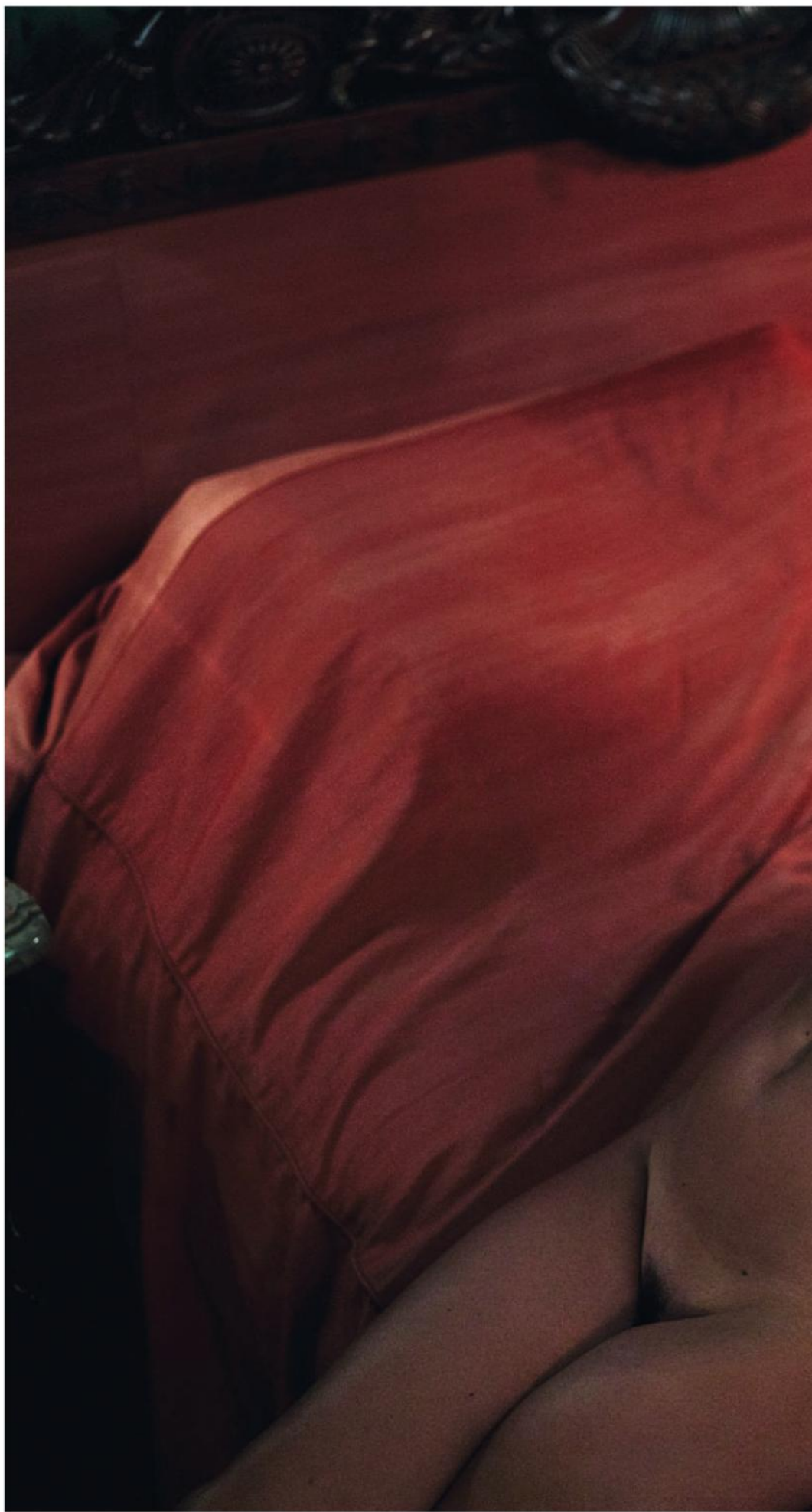
IF YOU WANT TO BE IN BUSINESS FOR A LONG TIME, you can't be snobby or stuck in the mud. You have to just flow with the river. So many people get formulaic. They're so proud that they won't change: "I do it *this* way." No, you don't. You *did* do it that way, but now you need to do it this way.

I'VE BEEN HERE A LONG TIME. We've never gone like a rocket. Never borrowed money. We've always done it very gently and very carefully. And slowly, slowly, you build it up.

MY DAD DIED WHEN HE WAS 94, and he wore a tie every day of his whole life. He wasn't fashionable, but he was very, very smart. 

M&M'S WORLD

A new coffee table book collects the work of two of fashion's most influential photographers — and the women they've immortalised

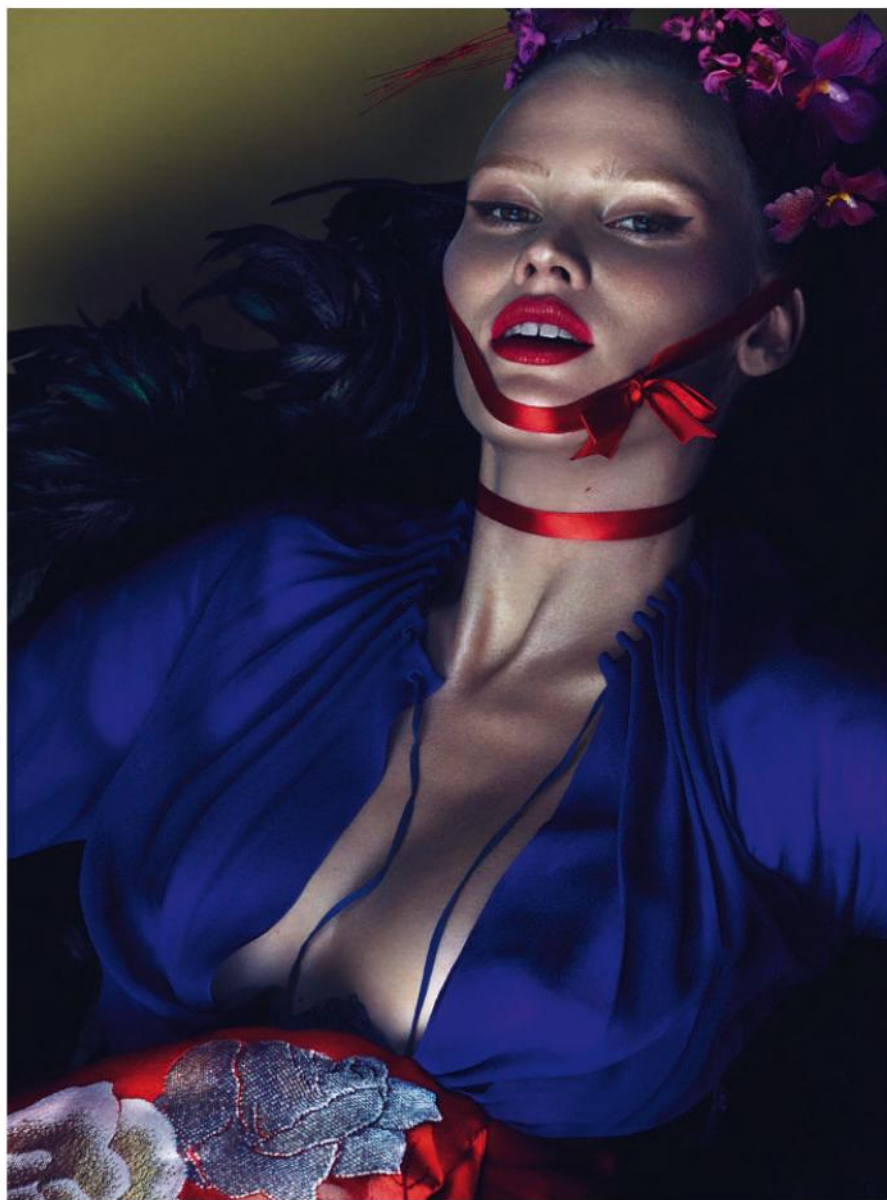




Kate Moss
Playboy, London, 2013



Daria Werbowy
Love, London, 2009



IF BY CHANCE YOU SAW LAST MONTH's edition of *Esquire*, with a smouldering Penélope Cruz on the cover, then you will already be familiar with the work of the photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott. Or Mert and Marcus as they are known by their fellow inhabitants of the fashion firmament, across which they have blazed a starry trail since the turn of the century. (Once you command the attention and admiration — and budgets — of the biggest designers, stylists and creative directors, you can safely drop the surnames.)

But who are we trying to kid? You were well aware of the work of

fashion's favourite photographic duo long before *Esquire* showed up — fashionably late to the party as ever. Even if you didn't know their names you'd seen their photos.

Mert and Marcus don't merely shoot campaigns for the most famous names in fashion: Giorgio Armani, Fendi, Miu Miu, Gucci, Saint Laurent, Versace, Givenchy. They are a brand in their own right, with their own distinctive style — glossy but hard-edged — and a subject to which they constantly return: the female form. Mert and Marcus's women are beautiful and powerful, often nude or semi-nude, their skin glistening, eyes flashing, and they project a kind of cosmic


sexual confidence. Madonna, J Lo, Gaga, Rihanna, Naomi, Cara, Kate, Linda, Angelina, Gisele, Björk: Mert and Marcus have shot them all, often as well as they've ever been shot. It's quite a feat, that, to take the most photographed women in the world and see them anew, make them look even more glamorous, even more seductive.

Of course, their rise coincided almost exactly with photography's switch from film to digital, and the opening of the Pandora's box of Photoshop, but that's hardly the only reason for their success. Many fashion photographers have become slaves to the airbrush and the retouch, and their subjects, →

Lara Stone
W, London, 2012

as a result, have ceased to look attractive, largely because they have ceased to look recognisably human. Mert and Marcus are masters of the technology; their women are improbably gorgeous, but not impossibly so.

Mert Alas, from Turkey, and Marcus Piggott, from Wales, met in 1994, at a party on a pier in Hastings, Sussex. The story goes that Marcus asked Mert for a light, and the rest is very shiny history: three years later they had converted a derelict loft in east London into a studio, and were shooting for Nineties London style bible *Dazed & Confused*. Future work appeared in British biannuals *Pop* and *Love* (the British stylist Katie Grand, who founded both those magazines, was a key collaborator) and by now they've photographed covers for every significant fashion magazine you've ever heard of, and *Playboy*.

The photos on these pages are from their new book, a giant retrospective of their work called simply *Mert Alas Marcus Piggott*. (Maybe surnames are making a comeback?) Published by Taschen in a limited edition of 1,000 copies, priced at £450 each, the book is a hefty investment (weight-wise and price-wise) but well worth the effort. This season, no coffee table will be able to call itself stylish unless it's holding them up. 

Alex Bilmes



Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott
Published by Taschen, £450, out now



Gisele Bündchen
Pop, London, 2003



Jayne Mansfield at her Hollywood mansion, the Pink Palace, 1960



A brief history of bad taste

By Stephen Bayley

THE OPENING SEQUENCE of Orson Welles' greatest film has Charles Foster Kane contemplating a snowglobe: little shards of porcelain or non-soluble soap replicate snowfall over a nastily cute and miniaturised scene. Why, Welles seems to be prompting us to ask, is a great mind bothered with trash?

It is reckoned that the first snowglobe appeared in Paris in 1889 and held a little Eiffel Tower ridiculously captive. Their great rival, the chunky, vitreous paperweight with ferns or fossils suspended in glass, appeared 50 years before. So very much of what we consider bad taste had its origins in the 19th century.

Or the 20th. Take Jayne Mansfield's Pink Palace on Sunset Boulevard. The actress, whose IQ actually exceeded her bust measurement expressed in centimetres, bought the Hollywood property in 1957. Ignorant, perhaps, of erotic Freudian associations, she promptly painted it pink with cupids, a heart-shaped bath and rose-hued furs. A fountain tinkled Champagne. The Pink Palace was eventually bought by Ringo Starr.

The list is endless. In his pioneering 1969 study, *Kitsch: the World of Bad Taste*, Gillo Dorfles, one of Milan's great intellectuals and a confidante of all that city's leading designers, made some interesting suggestions which I'll one day adopt into my own encyclopaedia of bad taste: Mona Lisa-branded cheese, a Giorgio Morandi painting turned into terrazzo, John Lennon's psychedelic Rolls-Royce, gondolier ornaments, celebrity masks, any sort of porno-kitsch (but specially subtypes involving Jayne Mansfield) and the sleeve art of The Moody Blues' 1968 album *In Search of the Lost Chord*.

Bad taste, they say, always involves an aesthetically lethal cocktail of swagger, facsimile, fakery, replication, bogus emotion and excess. It often involves fuss as well: in an observation which deserves a special entry in any anthology of poisonous snobbery, the Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm once remarked that the less educated the society, the greater the inclination towards decoration.

This might be true of Romford, but does not apply to Versailles. In fact, judgements about taste are always equivocal. The groundrules of taste are never stable. To understand taste, you always need to appreciate context. One of the only certainties is that discussing taste is a very satisfying way to start an argument. People today are fearless in their frankness about sex and money, subjects that were once taboo in polite conversation. But taste is different to sex and money, although both the latter are usually involved in the former. Because to an extent you are what you wear, eat, drive and where you live, your taste betrays you. Often cruelly. It is the last frontier of shame. So to be accused of having "bad taste" is to suffer a damaging assault on the soul.

In Thomas Mann's 1957 novel *Confessions of Felix Krull*, *Confidence Man*, you know the man's a scoundrel because his garden has earthenware gnomes and toadstools, a disco ball on a pedestal and a pneumatic device that plays Johann Strauss's "Freut euch des Lebens" when the door opens... as well as grottoes. Grottoes are always a problem to the taste investigator as anyone who has seen Bernardo Buontalenti's grotesque efforts in Florence's Giardino di Boboli must have thought. How can such hideousness sit

hugger-mugger with so much refined Renaissance beauty?

Bad taste presents itself as a calculated affront. It is surely willed and meaningful. Charles Baudelaire thought: "What is exhilarating in bad taste is the aristocratic pleasure of giving offence." Bad taste is aesthetic head-butting, a reminder that we get our word "ugly" from the old Norse word *ugga* which means "aggressive". An ugly customer is not someone ill-favoured in looks, but a rebarbative and argumentative twat. Very likely, he has bad taste. So what follows interests him.

It's easy to make jokey additions and another time I would also argue for: stretch limos; Dolly Parton's Dollywood resort in the Great Smoky Mountains, Tennessee; any form of wrestling; Peperami or any meat snack; Jeff Koons; anything with sequins; white high heels; fur; Philip Johnson's AT&T Building (now empty); Terry Farrell's M16 Building (still full); dried flowers; Frieze Art Fair; the Madonna Inn at San Luis Obispo, California; coloured candles; gold-foiled Ferraris; fairy lights; Christmas decorations....

So who's to blame? Samuel Beckett thought the great thing about bad taste was that the people who had it did not realise. That's an amusing half-truth because, despite the evidence that people make terrible choices, there is, objectively speaking, no such thing as bad taste. There is your taste and there is my taste. I like this, but you like that. I would not wear sequinned double denim, but you may do so with pleasure.

Or to put it this way, as art historian Bernard Berenson did: "Taste begins when appetite is satisfied." Food, you see, for thought.

→



BAD TASTE: THE MONUMENTS

'The Chamber of Horrors', 1852

Henry Cole, an over-busy Victorian civil servant, put the surplus of The Great Exhibition of 1851 on display in Marlborough House in London. Although The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations had been conceived as an imperial synopsis of contemporary possibilities, Cole and others were so horrified by the majority of the rubbish on display that he created "The Chamber of Horrors" to demonstrate what he called "false principles", or bad taste, in design. Thus, a stuffed stoat holding a parasol was presented as a reprimand. Cole's initiative was one of the great conceptual generalisations of his age, providing a basis for Victorian design theory as well as The Modern Movement which evolved from it.

Schloss Linderhof, 1886

Mad King Ludwig II was infatuated by Louis XIV and decided to imitate Versailles in Bavaria. But Ludwig was rather

more the Night King than the Sun King: a favourite occupation was travelling across Linderhof's subterranean lake in a boat towed by a team of rapidly paddling swans. Twelve electrical dynamos provided power to illuminate Ludwig's Venus Grotto.

Fontainebleau Hotel, 1954

Sixty-three years ago, the world's biggest hotel (with 1,504 rooms) opened in Miami Beach, Florida. A local newspaper wrote, "Gigantic? There must be a bigger word." The designer, Morris Lapidus, specialised in what he called "woggles" [ameboid shapes], an architectural feature unknown to the ancients since they had a finer vocabulary all their own. The dining room could seat 800 and featured a floor which ascended and descended with hydraulic assistance. Visitors sometimes described a sense of euphoria excited by the flambé parades in the restaurant. Despite it being a bad taste landmark, the hotel has appeared in both *Goldfinger* and *The Sopranos*. Considering the Fontainebleau,

it is impossible not to recollect Søren Kierkegaard's observation that "the best demonstration of the misery of existence is by the contemplation of its marvels."

Disneyland, 1955

The year after the Fontainebleau, Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California, securing for the West Coast of the United States a monument to bad taste at least as dismaying as Lapidus's leviathan hotel. The signature castle of the Magic Kingdom was modelled on another of Swan King Ludwig II's commissions, Neuschwanstein, itself an ignorant architectural fiction. Ever since, to describe something as "Disneyfied" — The National Trust, for example — is to say it is founded in false understandings and unsubstantiated retro fantasies.

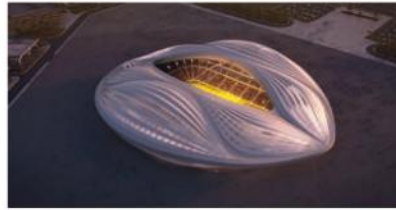
Cadillac, 1959

The '59 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham Seville is the most extreme product ever produced by industrial civilisation. The sesquipedalian name merely hints

at the excess of the actual automobile. Designed carelessly to mash molecules of air and with no regard whatsoever for efficiency, the environment or safety, the classic pink Cadillac was The American Nightmare. Harley Earl, its designer, seduced the public with epic vulgarity while garbling English magnificently. One of his finer instructions to a cowering underling was: "I want that line to have a duflunky, to come across, have a little hook in it, and then do a rashoom or a zong."

Astroturf, 1965

Short-pile synthetic turf (favoured for the expedients of low cost and high durability) was a feature of the Houston Astrodome, once the world's biggest enclosed sporting venue. Grass would have been better, but more expensive and less hardy: in the same way cashmere is not as tough as nylon. Facsimile effects have been condemned by aesthetes ever since Henry Cole's "Chamber of Horrors". As if to confirm the Astrodome's institutionalised bad



From left:

A small slice of the 800-capacity dining room at the Fontainebleau Hotel, Miami Beach; Disneyland's Sleeping Beauty Castle takes its inspiration from Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany; a Fifties pink Cadillac designed by Harley Earl; 'The Swords of Qadisiyah' arch in Baghdad, built to commemorate the Iran-Iraq war; currently under construction, the Al Wakrah Stadium in Qatar will host matches for the 2022 Fifa World Cup; Donald Trump golfing at his Mar-a-Lago resort, 1993

taste, its largest attendance (68,000) was for an event called Wrestlemania X-Seven in 2001. The Astrodome closed in 2008 and current plans are to re-purpose it as a parking garage. Astroturf has, however, survived as a bastard medium.

McDonald's, 1971

When he saw the first Tokyo McDonald's at the Mitsukoshi store on the Ginza in 1975, Andy Warhol declared it "the most beautiful thing in the city". Warhol was, of course, a connoisseur of crap.

Saddam's Victory Arch, 1989

Dictators normally have bad taste. On the site of the Museum of Gifts to the President in Baghdad, Iraq's leading sculptor, Adil Kamil, built "The Swords of Qadisiyah" in 1989. The heroic schema was sketched by none other than Saddam himself, while Kamil modelled Saddam's own muscular and hairy forearms. The points of the swords meet 40m above the ground and were cast using metal salvaged

from the Iran-Iraq war. Despite Desert Storm forces bombing and invading the Iraqi capital in 1991, Saddam's arch has been restored and still stands today.

'Duplitecture', 2004

In 2004, the Chinese built a perfect replica of Le Corbusier's majestic chapel at Ronchamp... but in Zhengzhou. Ten years later, as fast as contractors could build Zaha Hadid's Wangjiang Soho complex, pirates were copying it on another site. "Duplitecture" is the Photoshopping of architecture: new building technology allows the rapid imitation of anything, anywhere, regardless. There is now an arrondissement of Paris in Hangzhou, a pastiche Amsterdam near Shanghai. After Isis destroyed Palmyra's Arch of Triumph in 2015, a scale model repro appeared in London's Trafalgar Square six months later.

A House for Essex, 2015

Grayson Perry, an Essex maniac, is engaged in a knowing and on

the whole successful, assault on good manners. "Steal, copy, collage" might be his motto. Perry, who was born in Chelmsford, says his house is "a homage to the single mum in Dagenham, hairdressers in Colchester and the landscape and history of Essex". This fiction is now so popular that it has caused paralysing traffic problems on Wrabness's Black Boy Lane, and Essex Highways has agreed to install new road signs and markings to discipline the admiring crowds of Mondeo Men who want to worship the Essex cult legitimised by the Turner Prize-winner Perry.

The Al Wakrah Stadium, 2022

The late Zaha Hadid, in defiance of all sound principles of naval architecture and hydrodynamics, once designed a superyacht from Hamburg shipyard Blohm+Voss (builders of the WWII battleship *Bismarck*) which was modelled, apparently, on a cycling helmet. For the 2022 Qatar World Cup, an event already mired in accusations of corruption and

slave labour, she designed a stadium which, when seen from the air, appears to be inspired by gaping labial folds. Accused thus, Hadid replied that if you think anything with a hole in it is a vagina, then that's your problem.

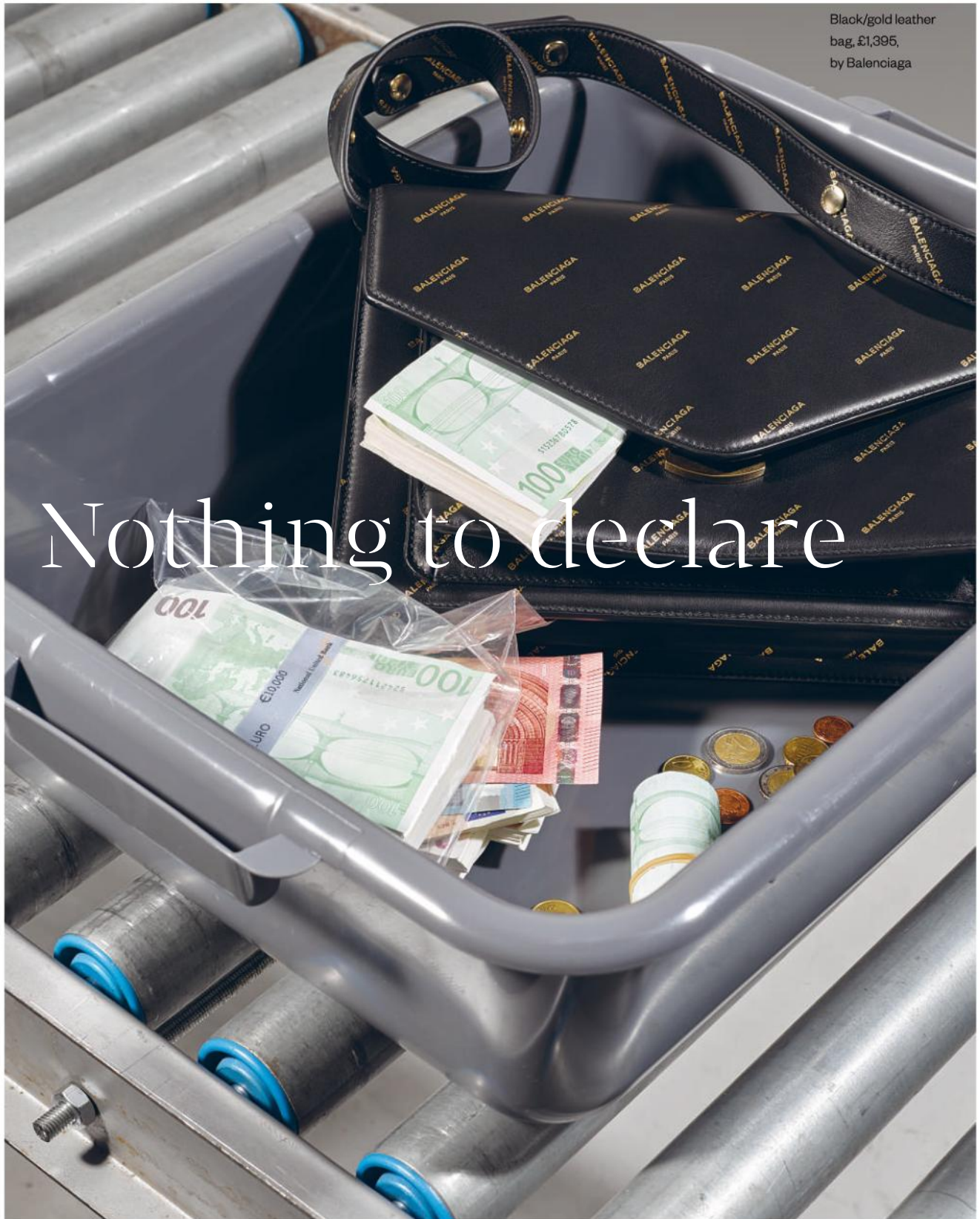
Mar-a-Lago, 1924 — present

The original Palm Beach haciendaburger (in Spanish Mission style) was built by breakfast cereals heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post and acquired by a crass, but ambitious, property developer called Donald Trump in 1985. Not content with the 118 rooms, the future President of the USA immediately added a 20,000sq ft ballroom. At one point in the mid-Eighties, Trump recognised that architecture was a useful tool for self-expression. The purchase of Mar-a-Lago was synchronous with the decision to build Trump Tower. They say the President likes hard, shiny things. 📺

Taste: The Secret Meaning of Things by Stephen Bayley (Circa Press, £29.95) is out now; circapress.com

Balenciaga

Black/gold leather
bag, £1,395,
by Balenciaga



Nothing to declare

Photographs by
Daniel Stier

Styled by
Catherine Hayward



Prada

Burgundy
leather-chrome
briefcase,
£2,410, by
Prada

Would you mind opening your bag for me, sir?

Gucci

Brown suede-leather suitcase with green/red detail, £3,490, by Gucci



Louis
Vuitton

Indigo leather
duffel bag,
£2,650, by
Louis Vuitton



Fendi

Blue/black/
red/ivory
leather-nylon
messenger
bag, £1,060,
by Fendi





Burberry

Antique red
leather doctor's
bag, £1,995,
by Burberry



Dior
Homme

Black nylon 'mosh
pit'-print shopping
bag, £1,150, by
Dior Homme

Photographer's assistant: Corey Bartley-Sanderson
Fashion assistant: Emie James-Crook
Set design: Vicky Lees; Rachel Tucker
Producer: Jodie Simms
Props: dudleywaltzer.com
See Stockists page for details

Giorgio
Armani

Burgundy alligator
leather travel
bag, £42,000, by
Giorgio Armani



Interview by Ben Mitchell

Portrait by Steve Schofield



What I've Learned

FRANK GEHRY

Starchitect, 88

I TOOK KARATE WITH CHUCK NORRIS and got all the way up to brown belt. I have the broken ribs to prove it. I haven't kept in practice, but I could still do 40 push-ups in one shot. Maybe a few more.

YOU'RE MORE INCLINED TO JUMP in the water with a bunch of characters when you're younger. I don't mean that literally. You go to places for no other reason than that's what all your friends are doing. It's about being together, feeling part of a gang and meeting interesting people. That goes away. And a lot of those friends are no longer here. I'm living longer than I'm supposed to.

I'LL HAVE A GLASS OF WINE or a tequila maybe twice a week. I don't smoke cigars any more. No drugs. I don't even take painkillers. I'm nervous about that for some reason.

I'M VERY BAD WITH CLOTHES. I hate shopping for them. When I was out with the boys dating they used to drag me over to Beverly Hills and get me all duded up. I'd wear a Borsalino hat and I looked cute as the dickens — I think. Now I've got enough clothes to wear something different every day for a couple of weeks. Guess what? I pick two or three things and all the rest of my stuff is just hanging there.

A BRITISH CRITIC ONCE SAID, "He's a one-trick pony's one-trick pony." My daughter was dying when that happened [Gehry's daughter, Leslie, died of cancer in 2008], so my defences were down and I didn't take it very well. I've never had somebody that I respect say something really biting. Not yet, anyway. You can be the first.

I GREW UP IN TORONTO. At the time, slot machines were legal in Canada, so my father had maybe 40 or 50 of them placed in restaurants and he would collect the money from them. That didn't last long. He did a lot of things but never very successfully. One thing he did that was quite special was dressing windows for a grocery store. I think he would have liked to have worked more on the artsy side, but he didn't have the education. My mother always wanted to go to law school, but women didn't go to college in those days.

MY FAVOURITE THING TO WATCH on television is *Foyle's War*.

I WAS HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE FIRST WIFE and probably drinking a little and running away from things. One day a friend of mine said, "I'm taking you somewhere and I want you to shut up." He took me to Milton

'Designing is like pulling a rabbit out of a hat. It all comes together and —voilà! — it looks good. I don't know how that happens'

Wexler, who was a psychoanalyst. He treated many Hollywood people. I had private sessions for a couple of years, and then started in a group of 15 people. This was in the early Eighties. The miracle of it was that if they turned on you, it was 14 people against one and you couldn't dismiss what they were saying. It really worked. Before that I was not able to give speeches. It made me more confident and loosened me up.

I USED TO GO SAILING BY MYSELF. It clears your mind and you come back feeling like everything's going to be OK. Now I go with friends, mostly architects or artists. We gossip about everybody: "Did you see what Norman Foster did this week?"

ALL OF US SIT AROUND AND FESTER over whatever it is that makes us angry. The control is inside you — you can change it at the flip of a switch, but you don't do it because for some reason you enjoy feeling sorry for yourself.

I HAD A COUSIN WHO WAS A CHEMICAL ENGINEER. They were looked up to in our family, so I thought I wanted to do that, too. In high school, I went to visit a laboratory for chemical engineering and that was terribly boring. They were preparing paints for automobiles. The guy that took me there, at the end of it he said, "I don't know what you're going to be, but this ain't for you."

DID I FEEL READY FOR FATHERHOOD? The first time around it was complicated. We had

two girls. Problems with the wife shortly after, and then leaving when they were aged 12 or 13. All the things that rain upon you from that kind of experience, which are mostly bad. The kids hate you, the mother... you know, all that stuff. The new batch is great. One of them's working with me — he's an architect — and the other one's a painter. I think we hang out together more than I did with the first group.


THIRTY PER CENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS WASTE. If the budget is \$100m, then \$30m is for nothing. Lost. With the technology we've developed, a lot of that waste has been cut down. I take real pride in budget control. If you ask somebody if the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao was an expensive building, then 90 per cent of people would put up their hands. It was built for \$300 per sq ft. It's a really inexpensive building. Nobody believes that. Is this true? Could this be true? It's fucking true!

I WOULDN'T SAY I'M A FULLY-FLEDGED, card-carrying atheist, but on the other hand I don't really think much about God. I went to Hebrew school and I had bar mitzvah in Canada and up until that point I was quite religious. A friend and I shared a physics class and we decided to prove there was no God. We went through the *Bible* and found 130 or 150 — I forget exactly how many — contradictions, wrote them all out, made this little book and delivered it to our teacher. We were both declared atheists and none of the girls in the school would date us. That was terrible.

I HAVE TWO BOOKS BY MY BEDSIDE: *Don Quixote* and *Alice in Wonderland*. You can find today in *Don Quixote*: the miscommunication, the misunderstanding. It's all there. Cervantes was on the money.

THE CHALLENGE OF DESIGNING and making something is like pulling a rabbit out of a hat. Somehow it all comes together and — voilà! — it looks good and everybody likes it. I don't know how that happens.

I LOVE ICE HOCKEY but I can't play any more. I have what every old guy has: back problems.

DON'T OVERLOAD ALL YOUR PROBLEMS on other people. Most of the problems you've got are usually stupid things you build up in your own head, and aren't really that relevant. Real sickness — when you lose a kid — that was horrible. I spent almost every day at the hospital with my daughter for three or four months. That was really hard. Except for things like that, I think we're lucky to be here. 

A SPECIAL BOND

The last of 007's famous Sixties Aston Martins was the DBS — no bullet shield, tyre slashers or machine guns, but four seats and a striking, muscular Seventies-heralding redesign. Will Hersey raises his Martini to the iconic car's half century

Photographs by
Christoffer Rudquist









Aston Martin DBS
1967-'72

Engine DOHC straight six, 3,995cc
Power 280bhp @ 4,500rpm
Transmission ZF five-speed
manual gearbox; or Borg-Warner
automatic transmission
Weight 1,588kg
0-60mph 7.1secs
Top speed 140mph

OF ALL THE JAMES BOND FILMS, 1969's *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* seems to split opinion the most. To its flag wavers, it's an anomaly — faithful to the books, portraying a flawed, vulnerable Bond (played by George Lazenby) without resorting to tacky set-pieces and gadgets, plus Louis Armstrong does the theme tune.

For its haters, see reasons listed above.

The ending is one of the harshest and most incongruous of any mainstream film, Bond or otherwise. (Do you still need spoiler alerts for something that came out 48 years ago?)

While sitting in the front seat of 007's Aston Martin DBS, his new and smiling bride, played by Diana Rigg, is gunned down by Blofeld's henchwoman Irma Bunt in a passing silver Mercedes-Benz 600.

The closest we've ever seen James Bond come to genuine happiness and this happens. On his wedding day. No wonder it would be 18 years before Bond climbed into an Aston again. The final frame is of the bullet-hole in the windscreen.

So many questions: can he ever recover from such a blow? Why hadn't Q installed bullet-proof glass like he had on the DB5? And did he have travel insurance for all the honeymoon bookings?

As with the film's shift in tone, the DBS, which launched 50 years ago, in 1967, with a list price of £4,473, marked a new chapter and design direction for Aston Martin.

Its predecessor the DB6 was only subtly different from the DB4 and DB5 before it, so while beautiful and elegant, its design roots were back in the Fifties and it showed.

This new DBS on the other hand, designed at short notice by William Towns, immediately had both eyes on the decade ahead — muscular, aggressive and sassy, emphasized by a longer, squarer bonnet and extended front grill, with a lush interior and a confident, tapered rear-end.

A V8 version followed two years later which would be the fastest four-seat production car in the world and cemented Aston's switch to phenomenally fast grand tourers, which would last another 20 years.

Its somewhat tragic Bond appearance would be the only one for the DBS. And for Lazenby, too. Today, this short-lived model is perhaps only just getting the attention it deserves, looking far fresher and more contemporary than five decades might suggest.

The DB5 will always be the most famous Bond car but the DBS, like the film it starred in, might just be the discerning choice. **B**

Directory

THIS WINTER, TAKE YOUR PUFFER JACKET
TO TOWN OR JUST KNOCK ABOUT IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE — THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Edited by Emie James-Crook



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coat, £1,080, by
Brooks Brothers

Grey Buckley Earl
wool double-breasted
suit, £675, by Daks

Charcoal merino wool
turtleneck jumper, £140,
by Brooks Brothers

Black leather double-
monk strap shoes, £495,
by Brooks Brothers

Grey/silver leather
laptop bag, £775,
by Pal Zileri

Stainless steel 42mm Bedrock
watch on black leather strap,
£685, by Shinola



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by The Kooples

White cotton
T-shirt, £7,
by Topman

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£330, by Jacob
Cohen at Harrods

Brown leather derby
boots, £440, by
Crockett & Jones

Yellow nylon
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Stainless steel Roma 60s
Chrono Vintage chronograph,
£1,650, by Visconti

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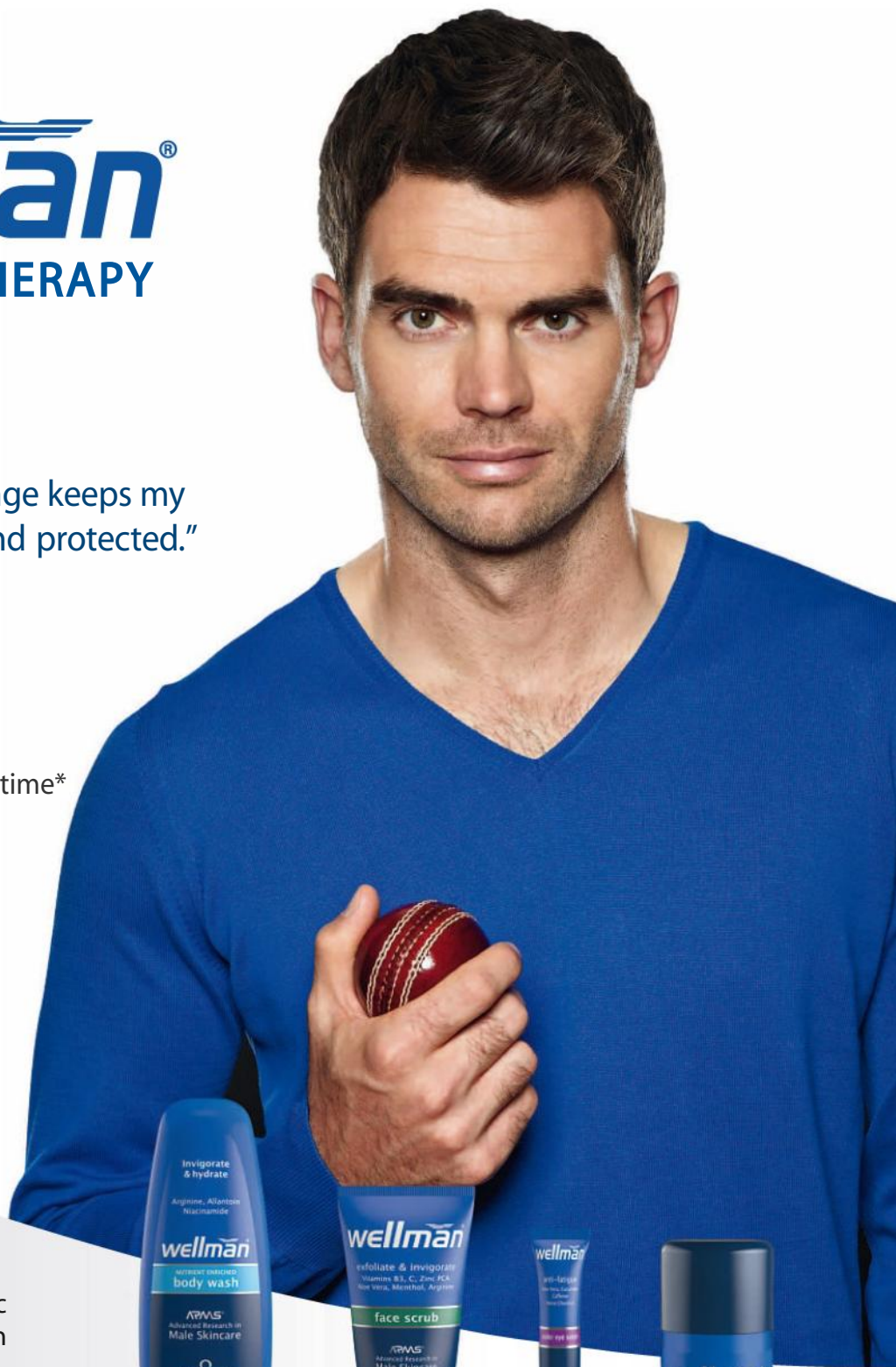
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